

SUPPLEMENTS TO  
VIGILIAE CHRISTIANAE

---



# Christians Shaping Identity from the Roman Empire to Byzantium

*Studies Inspired by Pauline Allen*



GEOFFREY D. DUNN AND WENDY MAYER

---

BRILL

## Christians Shaping Identity from the Roman Empire to Byzantium

# Supplements to Vigiliae Christianae

TEXTS AND STUDIES OF EARLY CHRISTIAN LIFE AND LANGUAGE

*Editors*

J. den Boeft  
B.D. Ehrman  
K. Greschat  
J. Lössl  
J. van Oort  
D.T. Runia  
C. Scholten

VOLUME 132

The titles published in this series are listed at *brill.com/vcs*

# Christians Shaping Identity from the Roman Empire to Byzantium

*Studies Inspired by Pauline Allen*

*Edited by*

Geoffrey D. Dunn  
Wendy Mayer



BRILL

LEIDEN | BOSTON

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Christians shaping identity from the Roman Empire to Byzantium : studies inspired by Pauline Allen / edited by Geoffrey Dunn, Wendy Mayer.

pages cm. — (Supplements to *Vigiliae Christianae* : texts and studies of early Christian life and language, ISSN 0920-623X ; Volume 132)

Includes index.

ISBN 978-90-04-29897-2 (hardback : alk. paper) — ISBN 978-90-04-30157-3 (e-book) 1. Church history—Primitive and early church, ca. 30–600. 2. Identification (Religion)—History—To 1500. 3. Identity (Psychology)—Religious aspects—Christianity. I. Dunn, Geoffrey D., 1962– editor.

BR162.3.C49 2015

270—dc23

2015019142

This publication has been typeset in the multilingual “Brill” typeface. With over 5,100 characters covering Latin, IPA, Greek, and Cyrillic, this typeface is especially suitable for use in the humanities.

For more information, please see [www.brill.com/brill-typeface](http://www.brill.com/brill-typeface).

ISSN 0920-623X

ISBN 978-9004-29897-2 (hardback)

ISBN 978-9004-30157-3 (e-book)

Copyright 2015 by Koninklijke Brill NV, Leiden, The Netherlands.

Koninklijke Brill NV incorporates the imprints Brill, Brill Hes & De Graaf, Brill Nijhoff, Brill Rodopi and Hotei Publishing.

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, translated, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise, without prior written permission from the publisher.

Authorization to photocopy items for internal or personal use is granted by Koninklijke Brill NV provided that the appropriate fees are paid directly to The Copyright Clearance Center, 222 Rosewood Drive, Suite 910, Danvers, MA 01923, USA. Fees are subject to change.

This book is printed on acid-free paper.

# Contents

Acknowledgements	IX
Abbreviations	X
List of Contributors	XIII

- 1 Introduction 1  
*Wendy Mayer and Geoffrey D. Dunn*

## PART 1

### *The Roman Empire before Constantine*

- 2 Jews, Gentiles and Ethnic Identity in the Gospel of Matthew 25  
*David C. Sim*
- 3 Die Herkunft der Christen in der *Apologie* des Aristides: Baustein zu einem Kommentar 48  
*Michael Lattke*
- 4 What did Ancient Christians Say when they Cast out Demons? Inferences from Spells and Amulets 64  
*Theodore de Bruyn*

## PART 2

### *The Late Antique East*

- 5 On Being a Christian in Late Antiquity: St Basil the Great between the Desert and the City 85  
*Andrew Louth*
- 6 The Likeness to God and the Imitation of Christ: The Transformation of the Platonic Tradition in Gregory of Nyssa 100  
*Shigeki Tsuchihashi*
- 7 Origen after the Origenist Controversy 117  
*Miyako Demura*

- 8 **Shaping the Sick Soul: Reshaping the Identity of John Chrysostom** 140  
*Wendy Mayer*

**PART 3**

*The Late Antique West*

- 9 **Theory and Practice in Ambrose: *De officiis* and the Political Interventions of the Bishop of Milan** 167  
*Mary Sheather*
- 10 **Jerome as Priest, Exegete, and ‘Man of the Church’** 186  
*Philip Rousseau*
- 11 **The Use of Comparison and Contrast in Shaping the Identity of a Desert Monk** 208  
*Jacobus P.K. Kritzinger*
- 12 **Augustine’s Scriptural Exegesis in *De sermone Domini in monte* and the Shaping of Christian Perfection** 225  
*Naoki Kamimura*
- 13 **Shaping the Poor: The Philosophical Anthropology of Augustine in the Context of the Era of Crisis** 248  
*Kazuhiko Demura*
- 14 **Innocent I on Heretics and Schismatics as Shaping Christian Identity** 266  
*Geoffrey D. Dunn*

**PART 4**

*Byzantium*

- 15 **Ariadne Augusta: Shaping the Identity of the Early Byzantine Empress** 293  
*Brian Croke*

- 16 **Dream Interpretation and Christian Identity in Late Antique Rome and Byzantium** 321  
*Bronwen Neil*
- 17 **Shaping Coptic Christian Identity: Severus and the Adoption in Egypt of the Cult of the Forty Martyrs** 342  
*Youhanna Nessim Youssef*
- 18 **The Treatment of Ecumenical Councils in Byzantine Chronicles** 364  
*Roger Scott*
- 19 **Flights of Fancy: Some Imaginary Debates in Late Antiquity** 385  
*Averil Cameron*

**PART 5**

*Reading the Past, Shaping the Present*

- 20 **The Personal Identity of Jesus Christ: Alois Grillmeier's Contribution to its Conceptualisation** 409  
*Michael Slusser*
- 21 **Christological Declarations with Oriental Churches** 426  
*Theresia Hainthaler*
- 22 **'Historical Development' and Early Christianity: George Tyrrell's Modernist Adaptation and Critique** 454  
*Elizabeth A. Clark*
- 23 **Male-Centred Christology and Female Cultic Incapability: Women's *impedimentum sexus*** 478  
*Kari Elisabeth Børresen*
- Index of Primary Sources** 503
- General Index** 508





## Acknowledgements

It is with gratitude that we acknowledge the editorial board of Supplements to *Vigiliae Christianae* and their readers for their advice to authors and their work on the manuscript. We also thank all those who reviewed the articles in their first draft, in response to which a number of the authors made substantive changes. Without both levels of review the volume would be much impoverished. The assistance of the editorial staff at Brill, especially Mattie Kuiper and Louise Schouten, is deeply appreciated and we thank them for expediting the volume.

Geoffrey Dunn and Wendy Mayer are both former doctoral students of Pauline Allen. Her inspiration, drive, and exemplum as a researcher have greatly enriched and in many ways enabled their own careers. This book is a small token of the incalculable ways in which both as a remarkable person and as an outstanding researcher she has fostered the careers of countless other scholars and in which she has for so many years served to further early Christian studies as a field.

# Abbreviations

AAS	<i>Acta Apostolicae Sedis</i>
AB	<i>Analecta Bollandiana</i>
ACO	<i>Acta Conciliorum Oecumenicorum</i>
AHC	<i>Annuario Historiae Conciliorum</i>
AKG	Arbeiten zur Kirchengeschichte
AKTG	Arbeiten zur Kirchen- und Theologiegeschichte
ANES	<i>Ancient Near Eastern Studies</i>
AnTard	<i>Antiquité Tardive</i>
Aug	<i>Augustinianum</i>
BAH	Bibliothèque archéologique et historique
BETL	Bibliotheca Ephemeridum Theologicarum Lovaniensium
BHG	Bibliotheca hagiographica graeca
BHL	Bibliotheca hagiographica latina
BHO	Bibliotheca hagiographica orientalis
BJRL	<i>Bulletin of the John Rylands Library</i>
BSAC	<i>Bulletin de la Société d'Archéologie Copte</i>
BSGR	Bibliotheca Scriptorum Graecorum et Romanorum Teubneriana
Byz	<i>Byzantion</i>
ByzAus	Byzantina Australiensia
ByzZ	<i>Byzantinische Zeitschrift</i>
CBNTS	Coniectanea Biblica New Testament Series
CCCOGD	Corpus Christianorum Conciliorum Oecumenicorum Generaliumque Decreta
CCG	Corpus Christianorum, series Graeca
CCL	Corpus Christianorum, series Latina
CEASA	Collection des Études Augustiniennes, Série Antiquité
CEFR	Collection de l'École Française de Rome
CFHB	Corpus Fontium Historiae Byzantinae
CH	<i>Church History</i>
CHR	<i>Catholic Historical Review</i>
CP	Corona Patrum
CPG	Clavis Patrum Graecorum
CPh	<i>Classical Philology</i>
CQ	<i>Classical Quarterly</i>
CSCO	Corpus Scriptorum Christianorum Orientalium
CSEL	Corpus Scriptorum Ecclesiasticarum Latinorum
CSHB	Corpus Scriptorum Historiae Byzantinae

<i>DOP</i>	<i>Dumbarton Oaks Papers</i>
DOT	Dumbarton Oaks Texts
<i>DR</i>	<i>Downside Review</i>
ECS	Early Christian Studies
FRLANT	Forschungen zur Religion und Literatur des Alten und Neuen Testaments
FzB	Forschungen zur Bible
GCS	Die Griechischen Christlichen Schriftsteller der Ersten Drei Jahrhunderte
GNO	Gregorii Nyssensi Opera
<i>GRBS</i>	<i>Greek, Roman, and Byzantine Studies</i>
<i>HeyJ</i>	<i>Heythrop Journal</i>
<i>HTR</i>	<i>Harvard Theological Review</i>
ICC	International Critical Commentary
ITS	Innsbrucker Theologische Studien
<i>JAEMA</i>	<i>Journal of the Australian Early Medieval Association</i>
<i>JbAC</i>	<i>Jahrbuch für Antike und Christentum</i>
<i>JBL</i>	<i>Journal of Biblical Literature</i>
<i>JbOB</i>	<i>Jahrbuch der Österreichischen Byzantinistik</i>
<i>J ECS</i>	<i>Journal of Early Christian Studies</i>
<i>JJS</i>	<i>Journal of Jewish Studies</i>
<i>JLA</i>	<i>Journal of Late Antiquity</i>
<i>JRS</i>	<i>Journal of Roman Studies</i>
<i>J SNT</i>	<i>Journal for the Study of the New Testament</i>
<i>JTS</i>	<i>Journal of Theological Studies</i>
LCL	Loeb Classical Library
LNTS	Library of New Testament Studies
MGHAA	Monumenta Germaniae Historica. Auctores Antiquissimi
MGHGPR	Monumenta Germaniae Historica. Gestorum Pontificum Romanorum
<i>MSR</i>	<i>Mélanges de science religieuse</i>
NBA	Nuova Bibliotheca Augustiniana
NIV	New International Version
<i>NTS</i>	<i>New Testament Studies</i>
OCA	Orientalia Christiana Analecta
OCM	Oxford Classical Monographs
<i>OCP</i>	<i>Orientalia Christiana Periodica</i>
O ECS	Oxford Early Christian Studies
OECT	Oxford Early Christian Texts
OLA	Orientalia Lovaniensia Analecta

PG	Patrologia Graeca
PL	Patrologia Latina
PLRE	<i>Prosopography of the Later Roman Empire</i>
PO	Patrologia Orientalis
POr	<i>Parole de l'Orient</i>
PTS	Patristische Texte und Studien
RAC	<i>Rivista di archeologia cristiana</i>
RB	<i>Revue Biblique</i>
REAug	<i>Revue des Études Augustiniennes</i> [et <i>Patristiques</i> ]
REB	<i>Revue des Études Byzantines</i>
RGRW	Religions in the Graeco-Roman World
RHE	<i>Revue d'histoire ecclésiastique</i>
RHLR	<i>Revue d'histoire et de littérature religieuses</i>
RSR	<i>Recherches des science religieuse</i>
RSSSI	Rutgers Series on Self and Social Identity
RTL	<i>Revue théologique de Louvain</i>
SAEMO	Sancti Ambrosii Episcopi Mediolanensis Opera
SC	Sources Chrétiennes
SE	<i>Sacris Erudiri</i>
SEAug	Studia Ephemeridis Augustinianum
SNTSMS	Society for New Testament Studies Monograph Series
SNTW	Studies of the New Testament and its World
SOCC	<i>Studia Orientalia Christiana Collectanea</i>
STAC	Studien und Texte zu Antike und Christentum
TAPA	<i>Transactions of the American Philological Association</i>
TCH	The Transformation of the Classical Heritage
ThZ	<i>Theologische Zeitschrift</i>
TRE	<i>Theologische Realenzyklopädie</i>
TS	<i>Theological Studies</i>
TSMJ	Texts and Studies in Medieval and Early Modern Judaism
TTH	Translated Texts for Historians
TU	Texte und Untersuchungen zur Geschichte der altchristlichen Literatur
VC	<i>Vigiliae Christianae</i>
VCSupp	Supplements to <i>Vigiliae Christianae</i>
VetChr	<i>Vetera Christianorum</i>
WTJ	<i>Westminster Theological Journal</i>
WUNT	Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament
ZKG	<i>Zeitschrift für Kirchengeschichte</i>
ZKTh	<i>Zeitschrift für katholische Theologie</i>
ZPE	<i>Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik</i>

# List of Contributors

*Kari Elisabeth Børresen*

member of the Norwegian Academy of Science and Letters, is Senior Professor (emerita) at the Faculty of Theology, University of Oslo.

*Theodore de Bruyn*

is Associate Professor of Religious Studies, Department of Classics and Religious Studies, Université d'Ottawa/University of Ottawa. He is currently President of the Association Internationale d'Études Patristiques/International Association of Patristic Studies.

*Averil Cameron*

Fellow of the British Academy (FBA), is the former Warden of Keble College and Professor of Late Antique and Byzantine History at Oxford. She is Chair of the Oxford Centre for Byzantine Research and in 2006 she was made a Dame Commander of the Order of the British Empire (DBE) for services to classical scholarship.

*Elizabeth A. Clark*

is Emerita John Carlisle Kilgo Professor of Religion, Duke University. She is a former president of the American Academy of Religion, of the American Society of Church History, and of the North American Patristics Society.

*Brian Croke*

is Executive Director of the Catholic Education Commission, New South Wales. In 2013 he was awarded the papal honour Knight Commander of the Order of St Gregory the Great (KCSG). He holds honorary appointments at Macquarie University and University of Sydney.

*Kazuhiko Demura*

is Professor in the Department of Philosophy and Art Studies, Okayama University, and Honorary Fellow, Centre for Early Christian Studies, Australian Catholic University.

*Miyako Demura*

is Professor in the Department of General Humanities, Tohoku Gakuin University, Sendai.

*Geoffrey D. Dunn*

is Senior Research Fellow, Centre for Early Christian Studies, Australian Catholic University, and Research Associate, Department of Ancient Languages, University of Pretoria.

*Theresia Hainthaler*

is Honorary Professor for the Christology of the Early Church and Theology of the Christian East, Sankt Georgen Graduate School of Theology and Philosophy, Frankfurt am Main.

*Naoki Kamimura*

is Research Fellow in the Department of Philosophy and Ethics, Tokyo Gakugei University, and Honorary Fellow, Centre for Early Christian Studies, Australian Catholic University.

*Koos Kritzinger*

is Senior Lecturer, Department of Ancient Languages, University of Pretoria.

*Michael Lattke*

is Emeritus Professor of New Testament and Early Christianity, The University of Queensland. In 2001 he was awarded an Australian Centenary Medal.

*Andrew Louth*

Fellow of the British Academy (FBA), is Emeritus Professor of Patristic and Byzantine Studies in the Department of Theology and Religion, Durham University, and co-editor of the series Oxford Early Christian Studies, Oxford Early Christian Texts, and Byzantine and Neo-Hellenic Studies (Peter Lang).

*Wendy Mayer*

is Research Fellow, Centre for Early Christian Studies, Australian Catholic University, and Associate Research Fellow, Biblical and Ancient Studies, University of South Africa.

*Bronwen Neil*

Fellow of the Australian Academy of the Humanities (FAHA) (History, Classical Studies, Religion), is Burke Associate Professor of Ecclesiastical Latin, Australian Catholic University. She is currently the recipient of a Future Fellowship, awarded by the Australian Research Council.

*Philip Rousseau*

is Andrew W. Mellon Distinguished Professor and Director of the Center for the Study of Early Christianity, Catholic University of America.

*Roger Scott*

is Fellow of the Australian Academy of the Humanities (FAHA), former Reader in Classics at University of Melbourne and former President of the Australian Association for Byzantine Studies and of the Classical Association of Victoria. In 2001 he was awarded an Australian Centenary Medal.

*Mary Sheather*

is Lecturer, School of Theology, and member of the Centre for Early Christian Studies, Australian Catholic University

*David C. Sim*

is Fellow of the Australian Academy of the Humanities (FAHA) (Classical Studies, Religion), and a member of the Centre for Early Christian Studies and Associate Professor, School of Theology, Australian Catholic University.

*Michael Slusser*

is Professor Emeritus of Theology, McNulty College and Graduate School of Liberal Arts, Duquesne University.

*Shigeki Tsuchihashi*

is Professor of Ancient and Medieval Philosophy in the Faculty of Letters, Chuo University, Tokyo.

*Youhanna Nessim Youssef*

is Research Fellow, Centre for Early Christian Studies, Australian Catholic University, and Associate Professor in Ancient Languages, Church History & Patristics, St Athanasius' Coptic Orthodox Theological College, Victoria, within University of Divinity.





# Introduction

*Wendy Mayer and Geoffrey D. Dunn*

In recent decades the issue of identity has emerged as a significant focus in scholarship concerning the world of the Roman and subsequently Byzantine empire.<sup>1</sup> This is linked to the postmodern turn in historiography, with its appropriation of theories from anthropology, sociology and social psychology, to the maturation of the discipline of late antique studies, with its socio-cultural emphasis and expansive chronological boundaries,<sup>2</sup> and to the fact

---

1 The plethora of anglophone books with ‘making’ or ‘the making of’ in their titles are symptomatic of this turn, stretching from Peter Brown, *The Making of Late Antiquity*, Carl Newell Jackson Lectures, vol. 2 (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1993); and William E. Klingshirn, *Caesarius of Arles: The Making of a Christian Community in Late Antique Gaul*, Cambridge Studies in Medieval Life and Thought (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994); to, e.g., David Brakke, *Demons and the Making of the Monk: Spiritual Combat in Early Christianity* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2006); Jeremy M. Schott, *Christianity, Empire, and the Making of Religion in Late Antiquity*, *Divinations: Rereading Late Ancient Religion* (Philadelphia, Pa: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2008); Richard I. Pervo, *The Making of Paul: Constructions of the Apostle in Early Christianity* (Minneapolis, Minn.: Fortress Press, 2010); and Naftali S. Cohn, *The Memory of the Temple and the Making of the Rabbis*, *Divinations: Rereading Late Ancient Religion* (Philadelphia, Pa: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2013). The latter title is indicative of the increasing influence of memory studies theory, reflected in recent book titles such as Benjamin L. White, *Remembering Paul: Ancient and Modern Contests over the Image of the Apostle* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014).

2 The definition of the chronological termini of late antiquity varies, with the boundary between one historical period and another at either end continuing to shift back and forth in response to ideological debates. So Peter Brown originally defined late antiquity as the period from 150–750 CE. See Peter Brown, *The World of Late Antiquity: AD 150–750* (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1971); and idem, *The World of Late Antiquity from Marcus Aurelius to Muhammad* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1971). A more restrictive view locates late antiquity in the period between the Diocletian tetrarchy and the Arab conquest: e.g., Stephen Mitchell, *A History of the Later Roman Empire AD 284–641: The Transformation of the Ancient World* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2006); and Averil Cameron, *The Later Roman Empire* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1993), 1: “a period that can plausibly be seen as running from the fourth to the seventh century and closing with the Arab invasions.”

that the period from the first to eighth centuries witnessed, in addition to the fall of Rome in the West and Arab conquest in the East, the appearance of two influential new religious movements, Christianity and Islam. Changes of these kinds impact group and individual identity at multiple levels. A critical component in the formation of a new religious movement, as is increasingly being recognised, is the demarcation of boundaries and the promotion of in-group/out-group bias.<sup>3</sup> As a result, texts produced by an in-group that were once read at face value are now increasingly being approached with a critical eye.<sup>4</sup> This is the case not just with religious movements, but applies also to groups that self-identify on political, linguistic, and ethnic grounds. So we find studies that seek to understand the production of Roman,<sup>5</sup> Byzantine,<sup>6</sup>

---

3 See the summary provided by Russell Powell and Steve Clarke, "Religion, Tolerance, and Intolerance: Views from Across the Disciplines," in *Religion, Intolerance, and Conflict: A Scientific and Conceptual Investigation*, ed. S. Clarke, R. Powell, and J. Savulescu (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 19–22.

4 A case in point is the *V. Porphyrii*, which purports to offer an eye-witness account of the life of the late-fourth-century bishop of Gaza. Its status has recently shifted from that of an historical source for events in Palestine in the fourth century to a fictionalised reconstruction of the past that serves to construct civic identity in the sixth century. See Aude Busine, "From Stones to Myth: Temple Destruction and Civic Identity in the Late Antique Roman East," *JLA* 6 (2013): 325–46.

5 The number of books, articles and dissertations of the past decade that debate the issue of Roman identity is as vast as the range of approaches and conclusions. See, e.g., David J. Mattingly, *Imperialism, Power, and Identity: Experiencing the Roman Empire* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2010); Louise Revell, *Roman Imperialism and Local Identities* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010); and Martin Pitts, "The Emperor's New Clothes? The Utility of Identity in Roman Archaeology," *American Journal of Archaeology* 111 (2007): 693–713. The trend towards viewing the production of identity as complex and unstable is seen in publications such as Nathaniel J. Andrade, *Syrian Identity in the Greco-Roman World* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013).

6 See the critique of this topic in Jannis Stouraitis, "Roman Identity in Byzantium: A Critical Approach," *ByzZ* 107 (2014): 175–220; and the literature cited at ByzIDeo (A blog for the promotion of research and scholarly dialogue on ideology and identity in Byzantine, Late Antique and Medieval Studies), <http://byzideo.blogspot.com.au/p/literatur-on-byzantine-identity.html>. A number of the essays in Walter Pohl, Clemens Gantner, and Richard E. Payne, eds, *Visions of Community in the Post-Roman World: The West, Byzantium and the Islamic World, 300–1100* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2012), likewise engage with this topic. On the interweaving of culture, language, and memory in identity see Anthony Kaldellis, *Hellenism in Byzantium: The Transformations of Greek Identity and the Reception of the Classical Tradition*, Greek Culture in the Roman World (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007).

or barbarian identity,<sup>7</sup> in addition to those that explore how Christianity as a religion or individual groups within it sought to construct a clear identity over and against society,<sup>8</sup> Judaism,<sup>9</sup> Islam,<sup>10</sup> or an internal ‘other’,<sup>11</sup> just as Jews, Muslims, and the spectrum of groups that constituted them were seeking to do the same.<sup>12</sup> An emergent interest in the realm of the subjective self and individual self-identity is a natural extension of this almost overwhelming focus by

- 
- 7 Originally theories of ethnogenesis dominated, then became hotly debated, on which see Andrew Gillett, ed., *On Barbarian Identity: Critical Approaches to Ethnicity in the Early Middle Ages*, Studies in the Early Middle Ages, vol. 4 (Turnhout: Brepols, 2003). For examples of how the approach to barbarian (now also ‘post-Roman’) identity has changed see Jonathan Conant, *Staying Roman: Conquest and Identity in Africa and the Mediterranean, 439–700*, Cambridge Studies in Medieval Life and Thought ser. 4, vol. 82 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012); the companion volumes, edited by Walter Pohl and Gerda Heydemann, *Strategies of Identification: Ethnicity and Religion in Early Medieval Europe*, and *Post-Roman Transitions: Christian and Barbarian Identities in the Early Medieval West*, Cultural Encounters in Late Antiquity and the Middle Ages, vols 13–14 (Turnhout: Brepols, 2013); and Robert W. Rix, *The Barbarian North in Medieval Imagination: Ethnicity, Legend, and Literature* (New York and Abingdon: Routledge, 2015).
- 8 E.g., Benjamin H. Dunning, *Aliens and Sojourners: Self as Other in Early Christianity*, Divinations: Rereading Late Ancient Religion (Philadelphia, Pa: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2011).
- 9 Again the literature is vast. For some of the foundational scholarship see Judith Lieu, *Christian Identity in the Jewish and Graeco-Roman World* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004); and Daniel Boyarin, *Border Lines: The Partition of Judaeo-Christianity*, Divinations: Rereading Late Ancient Religion (Philadelphia, Pa: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2004).
- 10 E.g., Bronwen Neil, “The Earliest Greek Understandings of Islam: John of Damascus and Theophanes the Confessor,” in *Religious Conflict from Early Christianity to the Rise of Islam*, ed. W. Mayer and B. Neil, AKG, vol. 121 (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2013), 215–28.
- 11 Recent examples include: Aaron M. Bibliowicz, *Jews and Gentiles in the Early Jesus Movement: An Unintended Journey* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013); and Douglas Boin, “Hellenistic ‘Judaism’ and the Social Origins of the ‘Pagan–Christian’ Debate,” *J ECS* 22 (2014): 167–96.
- 12 On Jewish identity see, in addition to Boyarin, *Border Lines*, e.g., Cohn, *The Memory of the Temple*; Ariel Schremer, *Brothers Estranged: Heresy, Christianity, and Jewish Identity in Late Antiquity* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010); and the essays in Jörg Frey, Daniel R. Schwartz, and Stephanie Gripentrog, eds, *Jewish Identity in the Greco-Roman World. Jüdische Identität in der griechisch-römischen Welt*, Ancient Judaism and Early Christianity, vol. 71 (Leiden: Brill, 2007). On Islamic identity see, e.g., Stephen J. Shoemaker, *The Death of a Prophet: The End of Muhammad’s Life and the Beginnings of Islam* (Philadelphia, Pa: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2011); and Fred M. Donner, *Muhammad and the Believers: At the Origins of Islam* (Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press, 2010).

scholars of the ancient, late-ancient, early mediaeval, and Byzantine worlds on the construction and maintenance of group identity.<sup>13</sup>

While some of the essays in this volume engage with social, cultural, personal, religious, and other categories of identity in this explicit way, the volume takes a more expansive approach to the concept. In some ways, it could be argued that all texts, as well as material objects, are, at a number of levels, shaped by and expressive of the identity of the group and/or individual who created them. Similarly, as is increasingly being recognised, the identity of individuals and groups who appear in texts or on material objects has been carefully crafted to align with or serve the construction of the identity of the author/s or artisan/s. The choice of texts that one reads or artefacts that one purchases, too, are expressive of identity, just as lack of choice can be indicative of an imposed identity. For the most part it is in these respects, rather than in a direct theoretical engagement with the issue of identity, that the essays in this volume approach the topic.

The theme—Christians shaping identity—is engaged with and operates at an additional level. The essays and their authors are themselves illustrative of a variety of shaped identities. They pay quiet tribute to the work of a scholar who has, over the decades of her career to date, directly and indirectly done much to shape the intersecting fields of classics, patristics, New Testament, early Christian, late antique, and Byzantine studies. The accolades by mentors, colleagues, former students, and friends usually found in such a volume are absent, although richly deserved. In their place, the topics treated and the authors themselves stand as witness to a remarkable career. This approach was chosen out of respect for this scholar's *modus operandi*, which is to lead from the middle (often of a team). It also reflects how she views her own legacy, which for her resides, even more than in her own numerous publications and achievements, in the Australian and international academic bodies, institutions, and scholars whose formation she has guided and helped to shape over the years. The theme of this volume is thus a natural one that falls out of a combination of the varied research topics in which this scholar has engaged, the avenues of research she has helped to pioneer, and the new ways of viewing and working in the above fields she has introduced to date. It also anticipates her continuing influence in these domains for years to come.

A few select examples of her vision for the future and the new directions in which she has taken scholarship in recent times will help the reader read

---

13 For an example of this recent trend see Derek Krueger, *Liturgical Subjects: Christian Ritual, Biblical Narrative, and the Formation of the Self in Byzantium*, *Divinations: Rereading Late Ancient Religion* (Philadelphia, Pa: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2014).

beyond the content of the essays presented here—useful and enjoyable as the subject matter of each is—to the meta-text that they constitute in regard to shaped identity. The Centre for Early Christian Studies at Australian Catholic University, recognised internationally as one of the largest concentrations of such scholarship, is the product of her vision to collapse the boundaries between the previously discrete, but naturally aligned disciplines of New Testament studies and patristics. Its emphasis on philological and social-historical research rather than theology has likewise helped to foster the merging of the two formerly separate disciplines of patristics and church history,<sup>14</sup> as well as to strengthen the natural intersection between early Christian studies, early to middle Byzantine studies, and the field of late antiquity. This contribution to the reshaping of the identities of scholarly disciplines has been further nuanced by her initiative to bring together scholars formerly geographically isolated as a result of the historical centralisation of scholarly associations and networks in the United Kingdom, Western Europe, and North America. A joint initiative with colleagues in Japan witnessed the founding in 2003 of the Western Pacific Rim Patristics Association, now the Asia Pacific Early Christian Studies Society (APECSS), which brings together annually scholars from a range of disciplines with an interest in Christianity and its context in the period extending from the first to eighth centuries. The range of countries engaged in this network has since expanded to include Korea, China, Russia, the Philippines, and now Latin America. These are not the only countries with which Australian scholars, under her leadership, have forged ties. Centre members have long participated in the annual meetings of the Canadian Society for Patristic Studies and exchanged ideas with Canadian colleagues. A long-standing relationship with South Africa, formed when a few individuals from that country began to attend the Oxford Patristics Conferences, has in recent years been expanded and formalised, bringing scholars of the Centre into collaboration and interaction with South African researchers across the fields of classical, ancient, and New Testament studies. The impact of these cross-cultural connections and influences on the way in which we now approach the first eight centuries CE is progressively coming into view.

---

14 In this respect the Centre and its scholarship fulfil Elizabeth Clark's famous prediction when asked about the future of historical theology in the field of Patristics: "less theology, more history". Elizabeth A. Clark, *Ascetic Piety and Women's Faith. Essays on Late Ancient Christianity*, Studies in Women and Religion, vol. 20 (Lewiston, Lampeter, and Queenston: The Edwin Mellen Press, 1986), 3. The Center for the Study of Early Christianity at Catholic University of America, Washington, DC, under the directorship of Philip Rousseau, has played a similar role.

A brief glance at her publications will show not just the breadth of her scholarship, but the multitude of ways in which it has led the field. Her work on the preacher and audience and on the value of homilies as a source for social history helped to cement the place of homilies, previously dismissed as “popular” and trivial, as a literary genre worthy of detailed study. As a result of her work on Maximus the Confessor, John Chrysostom, and Severus of Antioch, these figures and their works are now viewed in a different light. Her extensive work on the letter-writing of bishops has again demonstrated the wealth of data that can be mined from a previously neglected genre. Our view of the christological disputes of the sixth and seventh centuries has similarly benefited greatly from the documents she has edited, translated, and analysed over the course of her career. These are just a few examples. Perhaps the most significant way in which she has shaped scholarship for future generations, however, is in her embrace of an approach to research and publication rare in the humanities—collaboration.

As a reflection of her multi-faceted contributions, and inspired by them, the majority of the essays presented here address the shaping of Christian identity from within and without in the context of the broader social and cultural world of the first to eighth centuries. Some shift the focus from the internal formation of group identity to how in the course of those centuries Christianity as a social and religious movement impacted contemporary society. The final group of essays explore how various Christian groups in the present have been shaped by their reading of the past, in some cases with particular focus on how the self-identity of those groups itself filters that reading.

Of the essays that look at issues of Christian identity in the time before Constantine, David Sim examines the very origins of Christian identity as the presence of non-converted Gentiles within the Christian communities made the first followers of Jesus question how important a Jewish identity was for themselves. The focus here is with the community represented within Matthew’s Gospel and the conflict that arose between those members who believed that their Jewish heritage was essential, along with their faith in the messiahship of Jesus, and those who did not believe that being a follower of Jesus necessitated being Jewish as well. The argument here is that the Matthean community held the first view in that they upheld the enduring importance of the Torah and that Gentile followers of Jesus needed to become Jews. Michael Lattke shifts the focus from arguments about identity that occurred within emergent Christianity to how Christianity defined itself in relation to the Roman empire. Here building blocks for a commentary on the writings of the second-century apologist, Aristides of Athens, are offered. These constitute an example of how Christians of this period, when not focused specifically on the

question of their Jewish origins, appealed to ethnicity as a basis for identity. Theo de Bruyn considers exorcism, as recorded in early Christian spells and amulets, as a barometer of the symbolic world of Egyptian Christians. His essay considers the role *habitus* plays in the persistence of cultural norms, the tension between actual practice and the claims of Christian apologists, and the variability in the use of formulae in response to local factors. He concludes that the apologists were in part correct, but that the shape of the identity thus expressed could be somewhat variable.

From the pre-Constantinian world, in which Christianity was a minority religion, attention turns to the period after Christianity had gained imperial support, beginning with the East. In the first of four essays in this section Andrew Louth argues that the narrative of monasticism promoted by the texts of this period, for a long time adopted by scholars, has led to the history of the development of monasticism being read through a very particular (i.e., nostalgic Egyptian) lens. This view is at odds with the evidence, which indicates that Egyptian monasticism was not the pre-eminent form of early Christian asceticism. Rather, it is Basil of Caesarea who, on the one hand, preserves evidence of the greater range of ascetic possibilities that existed, and, on the other, is concerned himself with both ordering the church and shaping monasticism. Shigeki Tsuchihashi offers us insight into how Gregory of Nyssa transformed the Platonic notion of the perfection of human nature as becoming like God found in the cave allegory. This is a piece grounded in a thorough appreciation of the Greek philosophical tradition and its impact upon early Christian thinking, that gave it a distinct identity. Miyako Demura looks at the controversy that developed in the centuries following the death of Origen and how the charges brought against him by Epiphanius profoundly shaped the view of him. This contrasts with the recent appreciation of Origen as an Alexandrian biblical scholar and contributor to the development of Christian theology. Wendy Mayer shows how the dominance of theology in the twentieth-century discipline of patrology/patristics has misshaped the identity of John Chrysostom, a trend which has even longer roots going back to the fifth century. She builds upon a recent turn in scholarship that views him rather from within the context of the Greek *paideia* that informed his approach to human psychology. When observed from this angle he emerges as a psychagogue, concerned with teaching others about how to achieve a healthy soul. In this respect this essay is about retrieving John's own self-identity as opposed to the range of identities that a theological lens has imposed.

From the Greek-speaking East, attention turns to the Latin-speaking West in the fourth and fifth centuries. At the heart of identity construction is often the promulgation of an ideal set of behaviours, usually at variance with actual



practice. In the first of six essays, Mary Sheather leads us into the world of Ambrose's involvement in politics and his own theorising about that in *De officiis*. Here there rise to the fore questions of the ideal emperor, the relationship between church and state, and Ambrose's own self-identity as a Christian Cicero. Sheather sees a close correlation between the theory Ambrose espoused as applied both to political and ecclesiastical leaders and the ways he operated in practice with regard to the Altar of Victory, the basilica conflict, and the burning of the synagogue at Callinicum. Philip Rousseau ruminates on Jerome as a man of the church and relevant for the world in which he lived in all his non-conformity. Jerome is presented in this essay as a priest critical of much of the priesthood he saw around him, yet needing to be within the heart of the church not only administratively but intellectually in order to be an effective critic and reformer of it. The essay is both illustrative of the still fluid Christian identity of the time and ultimately concerned with reshaping the view of Jerome traditionally held in order to more closely approach his own self-identity. Koos Kritzinger also turns to Jerome, but specifically to Jerome's *Vita Malchi*, to see what he thought of the identity of the desert monk. This small work shows Jerome well aware of the need to pattern life on a wide variety of biblical as well as classical models, but shaping the story of Malchus and his wife in a subtle way that shows them surpassing what those models offered. Malchus' superior identity is very much founded on his chastity. Naoki Kamimura takes up consideration of Augustine of Hippo's neglected commentary *De sermone Domini in monte*. In looking at Augustine's reading of the Sermon on the Mount, Kamimura explores both the context within which Augustine's ideas developed and how this early work attempted to shape in a particular way the process of Christian perfection. Kazuhiko Demura offers another chapter on Augustine, this time on his insights into human nature when it came to how Augustine could motivate people on the need to care for the poor. Here, as in the essays of Kamimura and Tsuchihashi, for Augustine, Gregory of Nyssa, and other Christian bishops of this period at the heart of shaping the ideal 'Christian'—and thus an identifiably Christian community—lay human anthropology. By viewing people as fellow travellers Augustine was able to unite love of self with love of others and love of God. In the final essay in this section, Geoffrey Dunn brings together much of his recent work on Innocent I to consider how the labelling of others as heretics and schismatics—an example of out-group bias—promoted Christian identity. What this chapter argues is that in the early fifth century this Roman bishop sought to maintain clear Christian identity by excluding those who violated increasingly demarcated boundaries, but in a lenient way that promoted reconciliation.

The next five essays turn to an exploration of Christianity in the Byzantine world after the collapse of the Roman empire in the West. Brian Croke presents the career of Ariadne, an underrated Byzantine empress of the late fifth and early sixth centuries, whose position as daughter, wife, and mother of emperors and as a woman of independent authority held together the empire, shaped its Christian allegiances and, by shaping an identity for imperial females, paved the way for later empresses like Euphemia, Theodora, and Sophia. Bronwen Neil brings us into the world of dreams, the realm of personal identity. Focusing on the *Dialogues* of Gregory the Great and the *Oneirocriticon* attributed to Daniel, she looks at the variable attitude towards dreams and their interpretation between East and West. Youhanna Nessim Youssef turns to Egypt and the role of the retrospective construction of a group's history in the shaping of its identity. Appealing to later liturgical and conciliar texts, he argues that the introduction of the Armenian cult of the forty martyrs of Sebaste was important in shaping the identity of non-Chalcedonian Christianity in Egypt in the seventh and eighth centuries. The ascription of introduction of the cult to Severus of Antioch, a hero of the non-Chalcedonian movement who was exiled in Egypt, draws an intentional link between Antioch and Coptic self-identity. Roger Scott, who examines the place of the first seven ecumenical councils in Byzantine universal chronicles, takes us into the realm of how Christianity was exploited in the shaping of secular Byzantine identity. What this essay brings out is how this genre illustrates changing attitudes to the past and how such constructions of the past were utilised. Averil Cameron deals more delicately with the issue of identity via the topic of fictionality. Here in a number of ways we come full circle in our exploration of the theme in that, at a period in the early Byzantine empire when Persian and Arab invasions threatened its hegemony, in this society in which Christianity was now dominant Jews once again became an important tool for Christians to think with.

From consideration of the shaping of identity in the past, the final four essays turn to reflection on how the form imposed on the Christian past has served and continues to serve to shape Christian identity in the present. Inspired by the career and interests of the scholar this volume honours, they pay particular attention to the Roman Catholic and eastern Christian traditions. Michael Slusser considers the influence of Alois Grillmeier, who in the middle of the twentieth century changed perceptions about early Christian christological debate by rejecting the notion of an Alexandrian (allegorical) and an Antiochene (literal) school of exegesis, replacing it with a 'Word-flesh' and 'Word-man' classification. Christology, with its focus on how one structures the identity of a key figure in Christian religion, Christ, has itself played a

key role from the fourth century onwards in shaping the identity of Christian communities; it has also done much, from the nineteenth century to the present, to shape the historical discipline of patristics. Theresia Hainthaler, in looking at the documents produced by modern ecumenical dialogue between various Christian denominations and Oriental churches, brings the insights of Slusser's essay to the fore. The Oriental churches to the present day hold to the *mia physis* christological formula and reject the definition of the Council of Chalcedon (451). Hainthaler's observations on these texts, as evidence of diplomatic dialogue between groups that construct their identity differently, illustrate how a variety of the mechanisms that played a role in the first eight centuries CE—both positive and negative—continue to play a role today in the negotiation of Christian group identity. These mechanisms include the early church itself (as remembered in a particular way), which is employed to promote both group cohesion and alterity. Elizabeth Clark's essay further emphasises the key role played by the ways in which a community constructs its past. Here it is made explicit in her exploration of the impact of George Tyrrell's embrace at the turn of the nineteenth century of Catholic Modernism, with its approach to the early history of the church as a period in which the religion 'developed' from its beginnings rather than as one that saw the reception of a set of truths that remained static. A window is also opened onto how a group polices and reinforces boundaries perceived as under threat, employing strategies that go back to the very beginnings of Christianity. In the final essay, Kari Elisabeth Børresen raises the topic of how gender is employed in the construction of individual and group identity. Tracing the strategies via which the perceived deficiency of being female was reinforced or overcome in early (male) and medieval (female) Christian thought, and their subsequent trajectories, she highlights how this history and its perception continue to inform Catholic approaches to the present day. In a way, her essay brings together the insights of the other three essays in this section, with its exploration of how gendering melds with the shaping of Christ's identity, memory-construction, and boundary policing in the contestation of cultic leadership.

One of the most significant contributions of the scholar this volume honours has been her work on the multiple Christian identities that were contested in the centuries following the Council of Chalcedon. Her influence and inspiration in this respect emerges where concerns of heresy and orthodoxy, of group cohesion and loyalty, of how identities are contested and managed, weave in and out of every essay.

## Bibliography

- Andrade, Nathaniel J. *Syrian Identity in the Greco-Roman World*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013.
- Bibliowicz, Aaron M. *Jews and Gentiles in the Early Jesus Movement: An Unintended Journey*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013.
- Boin, Douglas. "Hellenistic 'Judaism' and the Social Origins of the 'Pagan-Christian' Debate." *J ECS* 22 (2014): 167–96.
- Boyarin, Daniel. *Border Lines: The Partition of Judaeo-Christianity*, Divinations: Rereading Late Ancient Religion. Philadelphia, Pa: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2004.
- Brakke, D. *Demons and the Making of the Monk: Spiritual Combat in Early Christianity*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2006.
- Brown, Peter. *The World of Late Antiquity: AD 150–750*. New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1971.
- . *The World of Late Antiquity from Marcus Aurelius to Muhammad*. London: Thames and Hudson, 1971.
- . *The Making of Late Antiquity*, Carl Newell Jackson Lectures, vol. 2. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1993.
- Busine, Aude. "From Stones to Myth: Temple Destruction and Civic Identity in the Late Antique Roman East." *JLA* 6 (2013): 325–46.
- Cameron, Averil. *The Later Roman Empire*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1993.
- Clark, Elizabeth A. *Ascetic Piety and Women's Faith. Essays on Late Ancient Christianity*, Studies in Women and Religion, vol. 20. Lewiston, Lampeter, and Queenston: The Edwin Mellen Press, 1986.
- Cohn, Naftali S. *The Memory of the Temple and the Making of the Rabbis*, Divinations: Rereading Late Ancient Religion. Philadelphia, Pa: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2013.
- Conant, Jonathan. *Staying Roman: Conquest and Identity in Africa and the Mediterranean, 439–700*, Cambridge Studies in Medieval Life and Thought ser. 4, vol. 82. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012.
- Donner, Fred M. *Muhammad and the Believers: At the Origins of Islam*. Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press, 2010.
- Dunning, Benjamin H. *Aliens and Sojourners: Self as Other in Early Christianity*, Divinations: Rereading Late Ancient Religion. Philadelphia, Pa: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2011.
- Frey, Jörg, Daniel R. Schwartz, and Stephanie Gripentrog, eds. *Jewish Identity in the Greco-Roman World. Jüdische Identität in der griechisch-römischen Welt*, Ancient Judaism and Early Christianity, vol. 71. Leiden: Brill, 2007.

- Gillett, Andrew, ed. *On Barbarian Identity: Critical Approaches to Ethnicity in the Early Middle Ages*, Studies in the Early Middle Ages, vol. 4. Turnhout: Brepols, 2003.
- Kaldellis, Anthony. *Hellenism in Byzantium: The Transformations of Greek Identity and the Reception of the Classical Tradition*, Greek Culture in the Roman World. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007.
- Klingshirn, William E. *Caesarius of Arles: The Making of a Christian Community in Late Antique Gaul*, Cambridge Studies in Medieval Life and Thought. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994.
- Krueger, Derek. *Liturgical Subjects: Christian Ritual, Biblical Narrative, and the Formation of the Self in Byzantium*, Divinations: Rereading Late Ancient Religion. Philadelphia, Pa: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2014.
- Lieu, Judith. *Christian Identity in the Jewish and Graeco-Roman World*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004.
- Mattingly, David J. *Imperialism, Power, and Identity: Experiencing the Roman Empire*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2010.
- Mitchell, Stephen. *A History of the Later Roman Empire AD 284–641: The Transformation of the Ancient World*. Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2006.
- Neil, Bronwen. “The Earliest Greek Understandings of Islam: John of Damascus and Theophanes the Confessor.” In *Religious Conflict from Early Christianity to the Rise of Islam*, edited by W. Mayer and B. Neil, AKG, Bd 121, 215–28. Berlin: De Gruyter, 2013.
- Pervo, Richard I. *The Making of Paul: Constructions of the Apostle in Early Christianity*. Minneapolis, Minn.: Fortress Press, 2010.
- Pitts, Martin. “The Emperor’s New Clothes? The Utility of Identity in Roman Archaeology.” *American Journal of Archaeology* 111 (2007): 693–713.
- Pohl, Walter, Clemens Gantner, and Richard E. Payne, eds. *Visions of Community in the Post-Roman World: The West, Byzantium and the Islamic World, 300–1100*. Aldershot: Ashgate, 2012.
- Pohl, Walter, and Gerda Heydemann, eds. *Strategies of Identification: Ethnicity and Religion in Early Medieval Europe*, Cultural Encounters in Late Antiquity and the Middle Ages, vol. 13. Turnhout: Brepols, 2013.
- , eds. *Post-Roman Transitions: Christian and Barbarian Identities in the Early Medieval West*, Cultural Encounters in Late Antiquity and the Middle Ages, vol. 14. Turnhout: Brepols, 2013.
- Powell, Russell, and Steve Clarke. “Religion, Tolerance, and Intolerance: Views from Across the Disciplines.” In *Religion, Intolerance, and Conflict: A Scientific and Conceptual Investigation*, edited by S. Clarke, R. Powell, and J. Savulescu, 1–35. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013.
- Revell, Louise. *Roman Imperialism and Local Identities*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010.

- Rix, Robert W. *The Barbarian North in Medieval Imagination: Ethnicity, Legend, and Literature*. New York and Abingdon: Routledge, 2015.
- Schott, Jeremy M. *Christianity, Empire, and the Making of Religion in Late Antiquity, Divinations: Rereading Late Ancient Religion*. Philadelphia, Pa: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2008.
- Schremer, Ariel. *Brothers Estranged: Heresy, Christianity, and Jewish Identity in Late Antiquity*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010.
- Shoemaker, Stephen J. *The Death of a Prophet: The End of Muhammad's Life and the Beginnings of Islam*. Philadelphia, Pa: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2011.
- Stouraitis, J. "Roman Identity in Byzantium: A Critical Approach." *ByzZ* 107 (2014): 175–220.
- White, Benjamin L. *Remembering Paul: Ancient and Modern Contests over the Image of the Apostle*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014.

## Appendix

### *Publications by Pauline Allen*

1979

"The Justinianic Plague." *Byz* 49: 5–20.

"A New Date for the Last Recorded Events in John of Ephesus' *Historia Ecclesiastica*." *Orientalia Lovaniensia Periodica* 10: 251–54.

1980

"Zachariah Scholasticus and the *Historia Ecclesiastica* of Evagrius Scholasticus." *JTS* ns 31: 471–88.

"Neo-Chalcedonism and the Patriarchs of the Late Sixth Century." *Byz* 50: 5–17.

(with Cornelis Datema). "Leontius, Presbyter of Constantinople—a Compiler?" *JbOB* 29: 9–20.

1981

*Evagrius Scholasticus the Church Historian*, Spicilegium Sacrum Lovaniense, Études et Documents, vol. 41. Leuven: Peeters.

"Greek Citations from Severus of Antioch in Eustathius Monachus." *Orientalia Lovaniensia Periodica* 12: 261–64.

(with Cornelis Datema). "Text and Tradition of Two Easter Homilies of Ps. Chrysostom." *JbOB* 30: 87–102.

"Codex Alexandrinus 60 (olim Cairensis 86 [1002])." *Scriptorium* 35: 63–65.

1983

(with Cornelis Datema, eds and trans.). "Another Unedited Homily of Ps. Chrysostom on the Birth of John the Baptist (BHG 847 i)." *Byz* 53: 478–93.

1985

"Blue-print for the Edition of *Documenta ad vitam Maximi Confessoris spectantia*." *Orientalia Lovaniensia Periodica* 18 (= Festschrift A. Van Roey): 10–21.

1986

(with Cornelis Datema). "Leontius, Presbyter of Constantinople, the Author of Ps. Chrysostom, In Psalmum 92 (CPG 4548)?" *VC* 40: 169–82.

(with Cornelis Datema). "BHG 1841s: An Unedited Homily of Ps. Chrysostom on Thomas." *Byz* 56: 28–53.

(with Cornelis Datema). "A Homily on John the Baptist Attributed to Aetius, Presbyter of Constantinople." *AB* 104: 383–402.

1987

"Some Aspects of Hellenism in the Early Greek Church Historians." *Traditio* 43: 368–81.

(with John Cawte, trans.). *Christ in Christian Tradition*, vol. 2 Part 1. *From Chalcedon to Justinian I*, by Alois Grillmeier (= *Jesus der Christus im Glauben der Kirche*). Louisville, Ky: Westminster John Knox Press.

(with Cornelis Datema, eds). *Leontii Presbyteri Constantinopolitani Homiliae*, CCG, vol. 17. Turnhout: Brepols.

1988

"Leontius, Presbyter of Constantinople—An Edifying Entertainer." *Parergon* 6A: 1–10.

"An Early Epitomator of Josephus: Eustathius of Epiphaneia." *ByzZ* 81: 1–11.

(with Cornelis Datema). "An Encomium of Leontius Monachus on the Birthday of John the Baptist (BHG 864f)." *Byz* 58: 188–229.

1989

(ed.). *Eustathii Monachi epistula de duabus naturis*, CCG, vol. 19. Turnhout: Brepols.

(with Cornelis Datema). "Leontius, Presbyter of Constantinople, and an Unpublished Homily of Ps. Chrysostom on Christmas (BHGα 1914i/1914k)." *JbOB* 39: 65–84.

1990

"The Use of Heresies and Heretics in the Greek Church Historians: Studies in Socrates and Theodoret." In *Reading the Past in Late Antiquity*, edited by G. Clarke, B. Croke, A. Emmett Nobbs, and R. Mortley, 266–89. Rushcutters Bay: Australian National University Press.



1991

(with Cornelis Datema, trans., intro. and comm.). *Leontius, Presbyter of Constantinople. Fourteen Homilies*, ByzAus, vol. 9. Brisbane: Australian Association for Byzantine Studies.

1992

(with Barbara Garlick and Suzanne Dixon, eds). *Stereotype Attitudes towards Women in Power. Historical Perspectives and Revisionist Views*. New York and Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press.

"Contemporary Portrayals of the Empress Theodora." In *Stereotype Attitudes*, edited by Garlick, Dixon, and Allen, 93–103.

1993

"Homilies as a Source for Social History." *Studia Patristica* 24: 1–5.

"Monophysiten." In *Theologische Realenzyklopädie*, 219–34. Berlin: De Gruyter.

(with Wendy Mayer). "Computer and Homily: Accessing the Everyday Life of Early Christians." *VC* 47: 260–80.

1994

(with Albert Van Roey, eds, trans. and comm.). *Monophysite Texts of the Sixth Century*, OLA, vol. 56. Leuven: Peeters.

"Reconstructing Pre-Paschal Liturgies in Constantinople: Some Sixth-century Homiletic Evidence." In *Philohistor. Miscellanea in honorem Caroli Laga septuagenarii*, edited by A. Schoors and P. Van Deun, OLA, vol. 60, 219–28. Leuven: Peeters.

(with Wendy Mayer). "Chrysostom and the Preaching of Homilies in Series: A New Approach to the Twelve Homilies *In epistulam ad Colossenses* (CPG 4433)." *OCP* 60: 21–39.

1995

(with John Cawte, trans.). *Christ in Christian Tradition*, vol. 2 Part 2. *The Church of Constantinople in the Sixth Century*, by Alois Grillmeier with Theresia Hainthaler (= *Jesus der Christus im Glauben der Kirche*). Louisville, Ky: Westminster John Knox Press.

(with Wendy Mayer). "Chrysostom and the Preaching of Homilies in Series: A Re-Examination of the Fifteen Homilies *In epistulam ad Philippenses* (CPG 4432)." *VC* 49: 270–89.

(with Wendy Mayer). "The Thirty-Four Homilies on Hebrews: The Last Series Delivered by Chrysostom in Constantinople?" *Byz* 65: 309–48.



1996

(with Elizabeth Jeffreys, eds). *The Sixth Century: End or Beginning?*, ByzAus, vol. 10. Brisbane: Australian Association for Byzantine Studies.

“Severus of Antioch and the Homily: The End of the Beginning?” In *The Sixth Century*, edited by Allen and Jeffreys, 163–75.

“The Homilist and the Congregation: A Case-Study of John Chrysostom’s Homilies on Hebrews.” *Aug* 36: 397–421.

1997

“John Chrysostom’s Homilies on 1 and 11 Thessalonians: The Preacher and His Audience.” *Studia Patristica* 31: 3–21.

(with Wendy Mayer). “Traditions of Constantinopolitan Preaching: Towards a New Assessment of Where Chrysostom Preached What.” *Byzantinische Forschungen* 24: 93–114.

1998

(with Mary B. Cunningham, eds). *Preacher and Audience: Studies in Early Christian and Byzantine Homiletics*. Leiden: Brill.

(with Raymond Canning and Lawrence Cross, eds). *Prayer and Spirituality in the Early Church*, vol. 1. Brisbane: Centre for Early Christian Studies.

“The Sixth-Century Homily: A Re-assessment.” In *Preacher and Audience*, edited by Cunningham and Allen, 201–25.

(with Mary B. Cunningham). “Introduction.” In *Preacher and Audience*, edited by Cunningham and Allen, 1–20.

“The Preacher and the Audience in the Patristic World.” In *Our Cultural Heritage*. Papers from the 1997 Symposium of The Australian Academy of the Humanities, edited by J. Bigelow, 203–18. Canberra: Australian National University Press.

“A Bishop’s Spirituality: The Case of Severus of Antioch.” In *Prayer and Spirituality in the Early Church*, edited by Allen, Canning, and Cross, vol. 1, 169–80.

1999

(with Bronwen Neil, eds). *Scripta saeculi VII vitam Maximi Confessoris illustrantia*, CCG, vol. 39. Turnhout–Leuven: Brepols.

(with Wendy Mayer and Lawrence Cross, eds). *Prayer and Spirituality in the Early Church*, vol. 2. Brisbane: Centre for Early Christian Studies.

“Severus of Antioch and Pastoral Care.” In *Prayer and Spirituality in the Early Church*, edited by Allen, Mayer, and Cross, vol. 2, 387–400.

“The Identity of Sixth-Century Preachers and Audiences in Byzantium.” In *Identities in the Eastern Mediterranean in Antiquity*, edited by G.W. Clarke = *Mediterranean Archaeology* 11: 245–53.

2000

“The Definition and Enforcement of Orthodoxy.” Chapter 27, in *The Cambridge Ancient History: Late Antiquity: Empire and Successors, AD 425–600*, edited by Av. Cameron, B. Ward-Perkins, and M. Whitby, vol. 14, 811–34. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

(with Wendy Mayer, intro., trans., and comm.). *John Chrysostom*, The Early Church Fathers. London and New York: Routledge.

(with Wendy Mayer). “John Chrysostom.” Chapter 45, in *The Early Christian World*, edited by P.E. Esler, vol. 2, 1128–50. London and New York: Routledge.

(with Wendy Mayer). “Through a Bishop’s Eyes: Towards a Definition of Pastoral Care in Late Antiquity.” *Aug* 40: 345–97.

Articles (*Abramo di Efeso; Alessandro di Cipro; Anniano; Barbarus Scaligeri; Chronicon Paschale; Colluto; Conone di Tarso; Costantino di Laodicea; Constantino diacono; Damiano patriarca di Alessandria; Eraclide di Nissa; Eugenio di Seleucia; Eustazio monaco; Evagrio Scolastico; Filone lo Storico; Fotino di Costantinopoli; Gelazio di Cizico; Giorgio il Grammatico; Giovanni di Nikiu; Giovanni Diacrinomeno; Giovanni Scolastico patriarca di Costantinopoli; Giovanni IV Digiunatore; Giovanni Malalas; Pseudo-Gregenzio; Gregorio antiocheno; Leonzio presbitero di Costantinopoli; Marco diacono; Panodoro; Paolo Silenziario; Pietro di Callinico; Pseudo-Cesario; Temistio diacono di Alessandria; Teodoro il Lettore; Teodoro monaco; Teodoro Sincello; Teona; Zaccaria di Gerusalemme*). In *Patrologia v, I Padri orientali (secoli v–VIII)*, edited by A. Di Berardino. Genoa.

2001

(ed.). *Bulletin de l’Association Internationale d’Études Patristiques*, n° 31.

“Severus of Antioch as Pastoral Carer.” *Studia Patristica* 35: 353–68.

“Maximos Homologetes.” In *Prosopography of the Byzantine Empire* 1: 641–867, edited by J.R. Martindale. Aldershot: Ashgate. CDROM.

2002

(with Bronwen Neil, intro., trans. and comm.). *Maximus the Confessor and His Companions: Documents from Exile*, OECT, Oxford: Oxford University Press.

(ed.). *Bulletin de l’Association Internationale d’Études Patristiques*, n° 32.

2003

(ed.). *Bulletin de l’Association Internationale d’Études Patristiques*, n° 33.

(with Bronwen Neil, text, trans., and comm.). *The Life of Maximus the Confessor (Recension 3)*, ECS, vol. 6. Sydney: Centre for Early Christian Studies.

(with Johan Leemans, Wendy Mayer, and Boudweijn Dehandschutter, intro., trans. and comm.). *Let Us Die That We May Live: Greek Homilies on Christian Martyrs from Asia Minor, Palestine and Syria (c. 350–c. 450 AD)*. London and New York: Routledge.

2004

(with C.T.R. Hayward, intro., trans., and comm.). *Severus of Antioch, The Early Church Fathers*. London and New York: Routledge.

2005

“The Life and Thought of a Heretic: The Case of Severus of Antioch.” In Japanese, *Patristica. Proceedings of the Colloquia of the Japanese Society of Patristic Studies* 9: 5–37.

2006

(with Wendy Mayer and Lawrence Cross, eds). *Prayer and Spirituality in the Early Church*, vol. 4, *The Spiritual Life*. Strathfield, NSW: St Pauls Publications.

“The Syrian Church Through Bishops’ Eyes: The Letters of Theodoret of Cyrhus and Severus of Antioch.” *Studia Patristica* 42: 3–21.

“The Horizons of a Bishop’s World: The Letters of Augustine of Hippo.” In *Prayer and Spirituality in the Early Church*, edited by Mayer, Allen, and Cross, vol. 4, 327–37.

“It’s in the Post: Techniques and Difficulties of Letter-Writing in Antiquity with Regard to Augustine of Hippo.” A.D. Trendall Memorial Lecture 2005, *The Australian Academy of the Humanities, Proceedings 2005*, 111–29. Canberra: Australian Academy of the Humanities.

“The International Mariology Project: A Case-Study of Augustine’s Letters.” *VC* 60/2: 209–30.

2007

(with Majella Franzmann and Richard Strelan, eds). “*I Sowed Fruits into Hearts*” (*Odes Sol. 17: 13*). *Festschrift for Professor Michael Lattke, ECS*, vol. 12. Strathfield, NSW: St Pauls Publications.

“The Preacher and the Audience in the Early Christian World.” Japanese trans. M. Demura, *Church and Theology* 44: 1–26.

“The Role of Mary in the Early Byzantine Feast of the Hypapante.” In *Patristica. Proceedings of the Colloquia of the Japanese Society of Patristic Studies*, Supplementary Volume 2, edited by Kazuhiko Demura and Naoki Kamimura, 1–22.

“Augustine’s Commentaries on the Old Testament: A Mariological Perspective.” In *From Rome to Constantinople. Studies in Honour of Averil Cameron*, edited by H. Amirav and B. ter Haar Romeny, *Late Antique History and Religion*, vol. 1, 137–51. Leuven, Paris, and Dudley, Mass.: Peeters.

“The Greek Homiletic Tradition of the Feast of the Hypapante: The Place of Sophronius of Jerusalem.” In *Byzantina Mediterranea. Festschrift für Johannes Koder zum 65. Geburtstag*, edited by K. Belke, E. Kislinger, A. Külzer, and M.A. Stassinopoulou, 1–12. Vienna, Cologne, and Weimar: Böhlau Verlag.

“Full of Grace or a Credal Commodity? John 2:1–11 and Augustine’s View of Mary.” In *“I Sowed Fruits into Hearts”*, edited by Allen, Franzmann, and Strelan, 1–12.

2008

“Challenges in Approaching Patristic Socio-Ethical Texts from a Twenty-First Century Perspective.” Japanese trans. Keiko Tsuchihashi, *Patristica. Proceedings of the Colloquia of the Japanese Society of Patristic Studies* 12: 75–92.

2009

*Sophronius of Jerusalem and Seventh-Century Heresy. The Synodical Letter and Other Documents. Introduction, Texts, Translations, and Commentary*, ΟΕΤ. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

(with Bronwen Neil and Wendy Mayer). *Preaching Poverty in the Late Roman World: Perceptions and Realities*, ΑΚΤΓ, vol. 28. Leipzig: Evangelische Verlagsanstalt.

(with Edward Morgan). “Augustine on Poverty.” In *Preaching Poverty in Late Antiquity*, 119–70. Japanese trans., Naoki Kamimura.

(with Silke Sitzler). “Introduction.” In *Preaching Poverty in Late Antiquity*, 15–33.

“Welcoming Foreign Saints into the Church of Antioch.” *JAEMA* 5: 9–20.

2010

(with David Luckensmeyer, eds). *Studies of Religion and Politics in the Early Christian Centuries*, ΕCS, vol. 13. Strathfield, NSW: St Pauls Publications.

“Cyril of Alexandria’s Festal Letters. The Politics of Religion.” In *Studies of Religion and Politics*, edited by Luckensmeyer and Allen, 195–210.

“How to Study Episcopal Letter-Writing in Late Antiquity: An Overview of Published Work on the Fifth and Sixth Centuries.” In *Scrinium. Revue de patrologie, d’hagiographie critique et d’histoire ecclésiastique* 6: 130–42.

“Loquacious Locals: Two Indigenous Martyrs in the Homilies of Severus of Antioch.” In *Martyrdom and Persecution in Late Antique Christianity: Festschrift in Honour of Boudewijn Dehandschutter*, edited by J. Leemans, Bibliotheca Ephemeridum Theologicarum Lovaniensium, vol. 241, 1–14. Leuven: Peeters.

2011

“Episcopal Succession in Antioch in the Sixth Century.” In *Episcopal Elections in Late Antiquity*, edited by J. Leemans, P. Van Nuffelen, S.W.J. Keough, and C. Nicolaye, ΑΚΓ, Bd 119, 23–38. Berlin: De Gruyter.

“Brushes with the *Imperium*: Letters of Synesius of Cyrene and Augustine of Hippo on Crisis.” In *Basileia: Essays on Imperium and Culture in Honour of E.M. and M.J. Jeffreys*, edited by G. Nathan and L. Garland, ByzAus, vol. 17, 45–53. Brisbane: Australian Association of Byzantine Studies.

- “Challenges in Approaching Patristic Texts from the Perspective of Contemporary Catholic Social Teaching.” In *Reading Patristic Texts on Social Ethics*, edited by J. Leemans, B.J. Matz, and J. Verstraeten, 30–42. Washington, DC: Catholic University of America Press.
- “Portrayals of Mary in Greek Homiletic Literature (6th–7th Centuries).” In *The Cult of the Mother of the God in Byzantium*, edited by L. Brubaker and M.B. Cunningham, 69–89. Aldershot: Ashgate.
- “Severus of Antioch as Theologian, Dogmatician, Pastor, and Hymnographer: A Consideration of His Work on the Feast of the Ascension.” *Questions Liturgiques* 92: 361–75.
- (with Bronwen Neil). “The Poor in Psalms: Augustine’s Discourse on Poverty in *Enarrationes in Psalmos*.” In *Meditations of the Heart: The Psalms in Early Christian Thought and Practice. Essays in Honour of Andrew Louth*, edited by C. Harrison, A. Casiday, and A. Andreopoulos, *Studia Traditionis Theologiae*, vol. 8, 181–204. Turnhout: Brepols.
- (with Bronwen Neil). “Displaced Persons: Reflections for Late Antiquity on a Contemporary Crisis.” *Pacifica* 24: 29–42.

## 2012

- (with Wendy Mayer). *The Churches of Syrian Antioch (300–638 CE)*, Late Antique History and Religion, vol. 5. Leuven, Paris, and Walpole, Mass.: Peeters.
- (with David C. Sim, eds). *Ancient Jewish and Christian Texts as Crisis Management Literature. Thematic Studies from the Centre for Early Christian Studies*, LNTS, vol. 445. London and New York: T&T Clark.
- “Stage-Managing Crisis: Bishops’ Liturgical Responses to Crisis (4th–6th Centuries).” In *Ancient Jewish and Christian Texts*, edited by Sim and Allen, 159–72.
- “Introduction.” In *Ancient Jewish and Christian Texts*, edited by Sim and Allen, 1–8.

## 2013

- (with Bronwen Neil). *Crisis Management in Late Antiquity (410–590 CE). A Survey of the Evidence from Episcopal Letters*. VCSupp, vol. 121. Leiden: Brill.
- (intro., trans. and comm.). *John Chrysostom, Homilies on Philipians*, Writings from the Greco-Roman World, vol. 36. Atlanta, Georgia: Society of Biblical Literature.
- (with Vladimir Baranov and Basil Lourié, eds) *Patrologia Pacifica Tertia*. Selected Papers Presented to the Asia-Pacific Early Christian Studies Society, *Scrinium* 9. Piscataway, New Jersey: Gorgias Press.
- “Religious Conflict between Antioch and Alexandria c. 565–630 CE.” In *Religious Conflict from Early Christianity to the Rise of Islam*, edited by W. Mayer and B. Neil, AKG, Bd 121, 187–99. Berlin: De Gruyter.

“Prolegomena to a Study of the Letter-Bearer in Christian Antiquity.” *Studia Patristica* 62: 481–91.

“Aspects of Preaching and Ministry in East and West AD 400–600.” *Scrinium* 9: 18–37.

2014

(with Bronwen Neil, intro., trans. and comm.). *The Letters of Gelasius (492–496): Pastor and Micro-Manager of the Church of Rome*, Adnotationes, vol. 1. Turnhout: Brepols.

“Bishops and Ladies: How, if at all, to Write to a Woman in Late Antiquity?” In *Men and Women in the Early Christian Centuries*, edited by W. Mayer and I.J. Elmer, ECS, vol. 18, 181–94. Strathfield, NSW: St Pauls Publications.

“The Festal Letters of the Patriarchs of Alexandria: Evidence for Social History in the Fourth and Fifth Centuries.” *Phronema* 29(1): 1–20.

“Saint Cyril, Bishop of Alexandria, and Pastoral Care.” *Phronema* 29(2): 1–20.

2015

(with Bronwen Neil, eds). *The Oxford Handbook of Maximus the Confessor*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

(with Bronwen Neil, eds). *Collecting Early Christian Letters: From the Apostle Paul to Late Antiquity*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

“The Lives and Times of Maximus the Confessor.” In *The Oxford Handbook of Maximus the Confessor*, edited by P. Allen and B. Neil. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 3–18.

“Rationales behind some Early Christian Letter Collections.” In *Collecting Early Christian Letters: From the Apostle Paul to Late Antiquity*, edited by B. Neil and P. Allen. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 18–34.

### *In Press*

(with Nathalie Rambault, intro., eds, and trans.). *Jean Chrysostome. Éloges des martyrs*, vol. 1, sc. Paris: Éditions du Cerf.

“Christian Correspondences: The Secrets of Letter-bearers.” In *The Art of Veiled Speech: Self-Censorship from Aristophanes to Hobbes*, edited by H. Baltussen and P.J. Davis. Philadelphia, Pa: University of Pennsylvania Press.

“Impact, Influence and Identity in Latin Preaching: The Cases of Maximus of Turin and Peter Chrysologus of Ravenna.” In *Preaching in the Latin Patristic Era: Sermons, Preachers, Audiences*, edited by J. Leemans, G. Partoens, A. Dupont, S. Boodts, A New History of the Sermon. Leiden: Brill.



**PART 1**

*The Roman Empire before Constantine*







# Jews, Gentiles and Ethnic Identity in the Gospel of Matthew

*David C. Sim*

## 1 Introduction

The study of Christian identity in the first century involves a range of complex issues and a variety of approaches, and scholars still debate whether we can speak of such an identity and, if so, on what terms.<sup>1</sup> Unlike later times where the boundaries between Christians, Jews, and pagans were more strictly defined, in the initial decades of the Christian movement there was much greater fluidity, especially in relation to the relationship between the fledgling Christian movement and the ancient religion of Judaism.<sup>2</sup> The Christian tradition began as a sectarian movement within Judaism but at some point, particularly with the influx of Gentile converts in the Pauline churches, it eventually became 'less Jewish' in both membership and praxis, and evolved into a religion in its own right distinct from Judaism. While scholars still debate the heated questions as to how, why, and when Christianity parted company with the Jewish faith, there is little doubt that the boundaries were very much blurred in the initial and formative period of the Christian tradition.<sup>3</sup>

- 
- 1 Many recent studies have been devoted to this specific issue. See, for example, J.M. Lieu, *Neither Jew Nor Greek: Constructing Early Christianity*, SNTW (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 2002); W.S. Campbell, *Paul and the Creation of Christian Identity* (London: T & T Clark, 2006); B. Holmberg, ed., *Exploring Early Christian Identity*, WUNT 1, vol. 226 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2008); B. Holmberg and M. Winninge, eds, *Identity Formation in the New Testament*, WUNT 1, vol. 227 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2008); and R. Hvalvik and K. Sandnes, *Early Christian Prayer and Identity Formation*, WUNT 1, vol. 336 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2014). See also M. Zetterholm and S. Byrskog, eds, *The Making of Christianity: Conflicts, Contacts and Constructions: Essays in Honour of Bengt Holmberg*, CBNTS, vol. 47 (Winona Lake, Ind.: Eisenbrauns, 2012), where many of the studies have the word 'identity' in their titles.
- 2 B. Holmberg, "Jewish versus Christian Identity?," *RB* 105 (1998): 397–425.
- 3 Most scholars would accept this proposition. For a recent defence of the view that the boundaries between Judaism and the Christian tradition were drawn very clearly and very early, see D.A. Hagner, "Another Look at the 'Parting of the Ways,'" in *Earliest Christian History: History,*

In terms of Christian identity in this period, difficulties begin as soon as we ask even simple questions. How did the early Christians mark or construct their own identity? What factors were integral to the creation of Christian identity? How did Christian identity differ from Jewish identity or even pagan or Gentile identity? These are not easy questions to answer. Of course there were certain beliefs and practices that all or almost all Christians would have shared in common. In terms of beliefs many of these would have involved elements of christology—Jesus as the prophesied messiah, his fulfilment of the Jewish scriptures, the necessity of his death on the cross in the divine plan, his resurrection from the dead, his life now in heaven and his imminent return as the eschatological judge. As for early Christian practices, there is good evidence that one formally committed oneself to following Jesus the messiah by submitting to baptism, and the evidence is strong that Christians met together in house-groups and participated in some type of eucharistic ritual, even if we know little of the details of either the initiatory rite of baptism or the eucharist. But knowing what followers of Jesus commonly believed and observed does not immediately settle the issue of Christian identity. There was another element in the mix that complicated matters enormously.

The Christian tradition, as noted above, emerged from within Judaism and the founders of the Christian movement were all Jews. The Jews themselves had struggled for centuries to shape and define their own identity as an ethnic, social and religious entity within a pluralistic Graeco-Roman world, and there was general agreement within the various streams of late Second Temple Judaism as to what constituted what we today might term 'Jewishness' or Jewish identity. These aspects included, amongst other things, strict monotheism, the election of the people of Israel, obedience to the Mosaic law that God had given his people at Sinai, the land of Israel as the gift of God, and the importance of the Jewish scriptures that both described God's dealings with his people and outlined their obligations according to the Sinai covenant. Central to Jewish identity was the notion of ethnicity, which involved not simply heritage and racial background, but also individual and communal religious practices as prescribed by longstanding Jewish tradition. By the first century of the Common Era, the boundaries between the Jewish and non-Jewish worlds were well established, and the process that could bridge these worlds by making possible the conversion of Gentiles to Judaism was also widely accepted. It was inevitable that any movement that arose within Judaism could not escape the issue of ethnicity in its quest to define its own identity. This applied to the

---

*Literature, and Theology. Essays from the Tyndale Fellowship in Honour of Martin Hengel*, ed. M.F. Bird and J. Matson, WUNT 2, vol. 320 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2012), 381–427.

Pharisees, the Sadducees, the Qumran community, and other sectarian groups that arose in this era. Needless to say, it was of paramount concern in the fledgling Christian movement. In terms of the early Christians, the belief that Jesus of Nazareth was the crucified and resurrected messiah necessitated a re-evaluation of all the issues associated with Jewish ethnic affiliation and social identity. An integral component of Christian identity was the belief in Jesus' messiahship, but what did this mean in terms of the contemporary Jewish mode of self-definition? Did faith in Christ replace the traditional Jewish identity markers or was it merely an extra one that supplemented the others?

Almost two decades ago I wrote a study on the importance of ethnicity in the Gospel of Matthew.<sup>4</sup> Although the focus of that article was ethnicity, it was largely concerned with the broader issue of identity or self-identification. How did this particular evangelist and his target readership understand themselves as Christians? What precisely made them 'Christian', and how did this self-identification compare with other Christian groups? It was argued that that one could not truly understand the Christian identity of the author of the gospel and his readers without taking into account the complex issue of ethnicity that dominated contemporary Judaism and that was such a decisive and divisive factor in the primitive Christian movement. In the period since the appearance of that article, I have not substantially changed my position, though I have refined certain aspects of it. One such refinement concerns terminology, which has significant conceptual implications for identifying Matthew's religious tradition. While in the 1996 article I placed Matthew and his group within the broad umbrella of first-century Christianity, I soon changed my mind and defined his religion as Christian Judaism, a sectarian form of Judaism that accepted that Jesus of Nazareth was the prophesied, crucified, and risen messiah or Christ.<sup>5</sup>

This particular study will build upon the findings of that older article and reinforce its conclusions. I still contend that if we are to understand the notion of identity in Matthew's Gospel, then we need to begin with the notion of ethnicity in first century Judaism. How did the Jews of the first century define

---

4 D.C. Sim, "Christianity and Ethnicity in the Gospel of Matthew," in *Ethnicity and the Bible*, ed. M.G. Brett (Leiden: Brill, 1996), 171–95.

5 Thus the title of my monograph: D.C. Sim, *The Gospel of Matthew and Christian Judaism: The History and Social Setting of the Matthean Community*, SNTW (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1998). For a defence of the term 'Christian Judaism' and a reconstruction of this particular tradition see D.C. Sim, "Christian Judaism: A Reconstruction and Evaluation of the Original Christian Tradition," in *Themes in Jewish-Christian Relations*, ed. E. Kessler and M.J. Wright (Cambridge: Orchard Academic, 2005), 39–58.

their own identity, and how did they relate to the wider Gentile world? Could Gentiles become Jews and, if so, by what process? Next it is essential to establish how the earliest Christian groups established their own identity markers. How much did they adopt from or alter the concept of Jewish identity, and how did these actions affect the inclusion of Gentile converts? It will be argued that the evidence is clear that in the initial decades of the Christian movement there was substantial disagreement over these very questions. While some followers of Jesus saw faith in Christ as the primary Christian identity marker which led to the abolition of the old Jewish distinctions between Jews and Gentiles, others disagreed and held the view that Christian identity was inextricably linked to a Jewish context. On this view, Jews needed to confess faith in Christ as messiah, while Gentiles were required to become Jews as a defining mark of their Christian commitment and identity prior to expressing their faith in Jesus as messiah. The author of Matthew's Gospel, it will be maintained, belonged to the latter group.

## 2 Jewish Identity in the First Century CE<sup>6</sup>

Prior to the exile in the sixth century BCE, the issue of Jewish identity was a relatively simple matter. Israel was a strictly tribal society where each tribal group lived within specific boundaries in the land that their God had given them. In this period, membership of the covenant community was based solely upon birth within an identifiable and accepted kinship group. The people of Israel shared their land with other ethnic groups, but they were careful to distinguish themselves from these 'resident aliens' (cf. Lev 17:8, 10, 13; 20:2; and 22:18). Since the identification of an Israelite at this time depended upon ancestry, kinship, and tribal affiliation, there was no possibility of conversion to it by outsider groups.<sup>7</sup> The Torah itself reflects this reality by saying nothing at all on the subject of conversion. This situation of extremely tight boundaries completely separating the people of Israel from their racially-different neighbours was not

---

6 Much of this section is an abbreviated form of an earlier and much more detailed study. See D.C. Sim, "Gentiles, God-Fearers and Proselytes," in *Attitudes to Gentiles in Ancient Judaism and Early Christianity*, ed. D.C. Sim and J.S. McLaren, LNTS, vol. 499 (London: Bloomsbury T & T Clark, 2013), 9–27.

7 In agreement with J.S. Milgrom, "Religious Conversion and the Revolt Model for the Formation of Israel," *JBL* 101 (1982): 175; and S.J.D. Cohen, *From the Maccabees to the Mishnah*, Library of Early Christianity (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1987), 21 and 50.

to last due to two major catastrophes. The first was the Assyrian conquest in the eighth century BCE, which led to the deportation of the northern tribes of Israel. The second was the Babylonian conquest in the early sixth century BCE, which involved the destruction of Jerusalem and the temple, and more importantly the exile of its leading citizens to Babylon. These events seriously eroded the original tribal structure of Israelite society, and those who returned from the Babylonian exile some five decades later placed less emphasis on their tribal ancestry and more on their status as priests, levites, and (lay) Israelites. This was reinforced in later centuries by the movement of Jews outside the traditional homeland to take up permanent residence in the countries surrounding the Mediterranean. The earlier rigid boundaries around the Israelite or now Jewish community based upon tribal and kinship affiliation were beginning to loosen, and with this change came a new understanding of Jewish identity.

The major impetus for this change came from the challenge to Judaism from Hellenism. The conquest of Alexander the Great introduced the Greek notion of citizenship (*politeia*), which involved not merely membership in a given nation or state but also a particular way of life. Alexander and his successors encouraged non-Greeks to hellenise by speaking the Greek language, worshiping the Greek gods and fully embracing the Greek lifestyle. Importance was attached not to racial origins but to cultural and religious practices. While many Jews were attracted to Hellenism, others vehemently opposed it as immoral and idolatrous. Yet even those traditional Jews who attempted to counter Hellenism were none the less affected by it. They perceived themselves as citizens of the Jewish state with its own distinctive lifestyle based upon the laws given to Moses at Sinai. This attempt to repel the threat of Hellenism on its own terms led to a crucial change in Jewish self-identification. Citizenship within the Judean state was no longer simply a matter of racial background and kinship affiliations. While these elements were retained, greater emphasis was now given to the traditional Jewish way of life according to the Mosaic law that was directly opposed to the Greek lifestyle. Even the term 'Judaism' (*Ἰουδαϊσμός*) was coined to differentiate the Jewish religio-cultural tradition from its Hellenistic counterpart (cf. 2 Macc 2:21; 8:1; 14:38; and 4 Macc 4:26). Similarly, the word *Ἰουδαϊζω* came into being to denote the act of living a Jewish lifestyle (cf. Plutarch, *Cic.* 7.6; Esth 8:17 [LXX]; and Josephus, *B.J.* 2.454 and 463). In the late first century Josephus actually testifies to this radical change of Jewish self-definition when he states that the Mosaic tradition involves not simply the matter of racial origins but lifestyle as well (*C. Ap.* 210). This change of emphasis inevitably witnessed the relaxation of the boundaries around the covenant people of Israel. Since membership was not restricted to those born

to Jewish parents but incorporated those who observed the Jewish way of life, the possibility of conversion to Judaism was the inevitable result.<sup>8</sup> A non-Jew could become a Jew, despite their racial background, by worshiping the God of Israel and by following the Jewish way of life as dictated by the Torah.<sup>9</sup> The boundaries that separated Jews from other peoples were still in place but they were now more flexible and malleable. In just a few centuries Judaism had transformed itself from a tribal and racial religion to which conversion was impossible to one that now was prepared to accept those whose ethnic background was Gentile.<sup>10</sup>

The attitude of Gentiles to Jews in this period showed no uniformity. While many Gentiles viewed the close-knit Jewish communities as misanthropists and ridiculed their distinctive ritual practices, especially circumcision, the dietary laws, and Sabbath observance,<sup>11</sup> other Gentiles were drawn towards the Jewish tradition. These people admired the Jewish faith for its antiquity, its strict monotheism, its ancient wisdom and moral codes, and the close society of its practitioners.<sup>12</sup> Some of them made a practical commitment to Judaism and were known either as God-fearers or God-worshippers. Such people are known to us from the Christian book of Acts (10:2, 22, 35; 13:16, 26, 50; 16:14; 17:4, 17; and 18:7), Josephus (*A.J.* 20.34, 195; and *B.J.* 2.560; and 7.45), Philo (*Legat.* 245), the Roman historian Dio Cassius (*Hist.* 67.14.1–2), and a good deal of inscrip-tional evidence.<sup>13</sup> While all God-fearers must have worshiped the Jewish God,

8 S.J.D. Cohen, *The Beginnings of Jewishness: Boundaries, Varieties, Uncertainties*, Hellenistic Culture and Society, vol. 31 (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1999), 125–29.

9 *Ibid.*, 132–35.

10 Precisely when this dramatic shift occurred is not possible to determine with any certainty. It can be deduced from the evidence of the book of Judith and the actions of the Hasmoneans that conversion to Judaism was an accepted practice by the middle of the second century BCE. See Sim, “Gentiles, God-Fearers and Proselytes,” 13–14. The origins of conversion must therefore pre-date this period by a significant amount of time.

11 See the extensive evidence in L.H. Feldman, *Jew and Gentile in the Ancient World: Attitudes and Interactions from Alexander to Justinian* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993), 123–76.

12 For detailed discussion see Feldman, *Jew and Gentile*, 177–287.

13 The literature on God-fearers is extensive. The most comprehensive treatment is B. Wander, *Gottesfürchtige und Sympathisanten: Studien zum heidnischen Umfeld von Diasporasynagogen*, WUNT 1, vol. 104 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1998). Other major studies are to be found in Feldman, *Jews and Gentiles*, 342–82; I. Levinskaya, *The Book of Acts in Its First Century Setting*, vol. 5: *Diaspora Setting* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 1996), 51–126; and more recently, T.L. Donaldson, *Judaism and the Gentiles: Patterns of Universalism (to 135 CE)* (Waco, Tex.: Baylor University Press, 2008), 469–82.

it is probable that there was a considerable range in their level of commitment. We hear of sympathisers attending the synagogue on the Sabbath, giving alms, fasting during the Day of Atonement, observing the dietary laws, and contributing to the annual temple tax,<sup>14</sup> but there is no reason to assume that all such people were engaged in all of these practices. It is important to note that, although the Jewish community welcomed God-fearers into their midst, they were still considered to be outsiders and not members of the covenant community. In order to cross that bridge, which had been erected when the Jews relaxed the boundaries that separated Jew from Gentile, God-fearers had to take a significant further step and convert fully to Judaism.

The Gentile who made the decision to cross the boundary and undergo conversion was known in the Greek-speaking world as a proselyte (προσήλυτος; cf. Philo *Spec.* 1.51–52; Philo, *Somn.* 2.273; Acts 2:10; 6:5; 13:43; and Matt 23:15). Once the Jewish tradition had broadened its sense of self-identity to focus more on lifestyle than birth and heritage, the need inevitably arose to establish the process by which Gentiles could become proselytes and so join the covenant people of Israel. In the latter part of the Second Temple period, three definitive steps were developed. These were the exclusive worship of the Jewish God and the complete renunciation of idolatry, full observance of the Mosaic law as specified in the Jewish scriptures, and total incorporation into the Jewish community.<sup>15</sup> All three elements are mentioned in the story of the conversion of Achior in the post-Maccabean book of Judith. Achior converts by firmly believing in God, submitting to circumcision in accordance with the Torah, and by joining the house of Israel (Jdt 14:10). That these elements remained constant for the next few centuries is attested in the writings of the second century CE Roman authors Tacitus and Juvenal. The former states that those who embrace the Jewish way of life undergo circumcision, despise the Roman gods and affiliate themselves solely with the Jewish community (Tacitus, *Hist.* 5.5.1–2), while the latter mentions monotheism, observance of the Mosaic law (including circumcision), and hostility towards non-Jews (Juvenal, *Sat.* 14.96–106).

The process of conversion outlined above, involving as it did the abandonment of all Gentile beliefs and practices and the adoption in their place of the specifically Jewish way of life, was intended to erase completely the Gentile identity of the convert and to create a new Jewish identity for him or her which was necessary if they were to be fully integrated into the Jewish community.

14 See Sim, "Gentiles, God-Fearers and Proselytes," 17.

15 Cohen, *The Beginnings of Jewishness*, 156–57; and Donaldson, *Judaism and the Gentiles*, 488–89.



As new members of the covenant community, proselytes were expected to observe the Mosaic law in full and they would be afforded in return all the privileges that native-born Jews enjoyed. In practical terms this meant, among other things, that they could be counted as an official member of the local synagogue, they could partake of the sacred meals, they would contribute to the temple tax and be buried with their fellow Jews.<sup>16</sup> In order to facilitate their integration, proselytes almost certainly would have moved into the Jewish section of their city to be closer to their community and the synagogue, and many or most would have taken Jewish names, although all the extant evidence of this practice comes from no earlier than the third century CE.<sup>17</sup>

An interesting question that arises is the status of Gentile converts in Judaism. Did their adoption of a Jewish identity entail that they were equal to native-born Jews, or were they deemed to be inferior because of their non-Jewish background? Both Philo (*Spec.* 1.51–53; *Legat.* 211; and *Virt.* 102–103) and Josephus (*C. Ap.* 2.209–10) accepted that the proselyte was of equal rank with the native-born and shared equally all the privileges of the covenant people. This view is also found in the later Rabbinic literature (e.g. *b. Yeb.* 47a–b) where many texts emphasise the complete transformation of the convert (e.g. *m. Git.* 2:6; *y. Nid.* 49b; *y. Yeb.* 6a; and *b. Yeb.* 35a). Yet, despite these affirmations of equality, the practical reality was perhaps somewhat different. There is a wealth of evidence that converts in general were considered of lesser status than those born as Jews. The book of Acts distinguishes between Jews and proselytes (2:10; and 13:43), and in many Jewish traditions they are listed as a particular sub-group within the people of Israel, and more often than not they are ranked at the bottom. An early list from Qumran places in order of importance priests, levites, Israelites, and proselytes (CD 14.3–6), and this is repeated in later Rabbinic tradition (*t. Qidd.* 5.1). One Rabbinic text states that even in heaven there will be a distinction between native-born Israelites and proselytes (*y. Hag.* 66a). It is telling that Gentile converts often bear the title ‘the proselyte’, which immediately identifies their origins and their different status to those born Jews. We find this title in the reference to Nicolaus the proselyte in Acts 6:5, throughout much of the Rabbinic literature, and in the third-century CE Aphrodisias inscription where three converts are mentioned by name and all are described as ‘the proselyte’.<sup>18</sup> This was not a simple matter of Jewish snobbishness or arrogance, but was rather based upon practical concerns. Many Rabbinic texts claim that on a whole host of issues proselytes

16 Cohen, *The Beginnings of Jewishness*, 159.

17 See Sim, “Gentiles, God-Fearers and Proselytes,” 23.

18 *Ibid.*, 25–26.

were governed by different rules because of their ancestry, including prayer, the second tithe, and marriage.<sup>19</sup> If the Mosaic law was to be followed, then it was a matter of practical necessity to distinguish the native-born Jew from the proselyte.

### 3 Diverse Views over Christian Identity in the Early Christian Movement

The rise of the Christian movement in the early first century CE was presented with similar challenges in terms of self-identification. What were the primary factors that defined and identified followers of Jesus of Nazareth who proclaimed that he was the promised Jewish messiah? How should believers in Jesus define themselves in relation to or against other Jews, and how should they deal with the broader Gentile world? Should the boundaries around this movement be rigid or flexible, and on what grounds should they be constructed? What processes were necessary for outsiders to convert and become members of the fledgling Christian movement? These complex issues arose very early on and the early Christians quickly formed themselves into two opposing camps.<sup>20</sup>

One of these was the original Christian community that gathered in Jerusalem shortly after the death and resurrection of Jesus.<sup>21</sup> This group, in which the disciples of Jesus and the family of Jesus played leading roles, was content to remain within the traditional parameters of first-century Judaism. They continued to participate in the traditional temple cult (Acts 2:46; 3:1–2; and 5:20) and, as subsequent events bore out, they took care to observe the requirements of the Torah. These followers of Jesus limited their preaching to other Jews (Acts 2:5, 14, 22, 41; and 3:12) and their converts included priests (Acts 7:7), Pharisees (Acts 15:5), and Greek-speaking Jews known as the Hellenists (6:1). In the initial period the Gentiles were not on their missionary horizon. The Jerusalem Christian community had no intention of breaking

19 Cohen, *The Beginnings of Jewishness*, 161.

20 Much of the following discussion is a summary and updated version of earlier and more detailed studies. See Sim, “Christianity and Ethnicity,” 177–84; and idem, “Christian Judaism,” 40–45.

21 For a reconstruction of this community see I.J. Elmer, *Paul, Jerusalem and the Judaizers: The Galatian Crisis in its Broadest Historical Context*, WUNT 2, vol. 258 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2009), 44–53; and J.D.G. Dunn, *Christianity in the Making*, vol. 2: *Beginning From Jerusalem* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 2009), 172–240.

with the Jewish faith. On the contrary, it was firmly of the view that belief in Jesus as the messiah and risen Lord was only legitimate within the established boundaries of contemporary Judaism. In other words, the revelation of the Christ was continuous rather than discontinuous with the earlier covenant between God and the people of Israel that was mediated through Moses at Sinai. It was for this reason that they continued to observe the Mosaic law, though they interpreted the Torah according to the distinctive teachings of Jesus. The members of the Jerusalem community are therefore best described as Christian Jews because they professed their faith in Christ within the broad parameters of the Jewish tradition.

But it is important to remember that these Jews had a dual allegiance. They accepted the terms of the Sinai covenant and the necessity to obey the Torah, but they also proclaimed that God had supplemented that revelation in the life, teaching, death, and resurrection of his messiah. Salvation now lay not simply with the Jews, but with those Jews who professed faith in Jesus. To put the matter another way, one needed to be both Jewish and a believer in Christ. Simply being Jewish and fulfilling the demands of the Torah was no longer enough because the Sinai covenant was now supplemented by the revelation of the messiah. Thus one had to be a Christian as well as a Jew. This could be accomplished by submitting to baptism as the initiatory ritual and by accepting Jesus as the promised messiah. Non-Christian Jews, those who rejected the messiahship of Jesus, would be excluded from salvation (Acts 4:12). By the same token, simply being Christian and professing Jesus as Christ and saviour was not in itself sufficient for salvation unless one did so within the terms of the Sinai covenant and observed the Torah as well (Acts 15:1). Thus one had to be a Jew as well as a Christian. This stance of course had important implications for Gentiles who wished to join the Christian movement.

The other major strand in the primitive Christian tradition had an entirely different perspective. According to this tradition, the new revelation of the Christ entailed identity markers that were largely antithetical to those of Judaism. This innovation within the Christian movement probably had its origins with the Hellenists who were originally attached to the Jerusalem church, but after being persecuted they left Jerusalem and moved their base to Antioch (Acts 8:1; and 11:19–24) where they began preaching to Gentiles.<sup>22</sup> The converted Paul soon made his way to the Hellenist church in Antioch

---

22 On the Hellenists, see Sim, *Matthew and Christian Judaism*, 64–77; Elmer, *Paul, Jerusalem and the Judaizers*, 51–79; and Dunn, *Beginning from Jerusalem*, 241–321.

(Acts 11:25–26), and eventually became the greatest champion of this alternative Christian message.<sup>23</sup>

The salient points of this Christian tradition can be summarised as follows. The old covenant between God and the people of Israel has been superseded by the coming of the Christ (2 Cor 3:14). In the light of this covenant brought by Jesus the messiah (see 1 Cor 11:25; and 2 Cor 3:6), there was no longer any distinction between Jew and Gentile (Rom 10:12; 1 Cor 12:13; and Gal 3:28; cf. Gal. 3:15). Salvation now comes through faith in Christ alone and not through obedience to the Law (cf. Rom 3:22 and 30). The Torah, although given by God at Sinai, was intended merely as a temporary measure, a custodian until faith was revealed by Christ (Gal 3:23–25), and Christ has now brought the Law to an end (Rom 10:4a). Paul spells out his own break with Judaism in Galatians 1:13–14 where he distinguishes between his current life as a follower of Christ and his former life in Judaism. In Philippians 3:5–8 he even goes so far as to say that his Jewish heritage now counts for nothing. What this means in practical terms is that Paul is no longer bound by the Mosaic law (1 Cor 9:20–21) and he renounces many of the ritual elements that served as Jewish identity markers—circumcision (Rom 2:28–29; Gal 5:12; and Phil 3:2–3), the Sabbath and Jewish festivals (Gal 4:10), and the dietary laws (Rom 14:14, 20). His mission to the Gentiles therefore emphasised faith in Christ and strictly precluded their observance of the Torah.

These two types within the early Christian movement could not be more different. The position of the Jerusalem church held that salvation depended upon being an observant Jew who accepted the messiahship of Jesus. Christian identity thus involved being both Jewish and Christian. If Gentile believers in Christ were to be saved, then they needed to convert to Judaism and ground their Christian affiliation within a Jewish context. The Hellenists and Paul, on the other hand, were of the view that the Christ event had rendered obsolete the very notions of Jewish and Gentile identity and that salvation for both groups lay in accepting Jesus as the resurrected messiah and Lord. As Paul tells the Romans in Romans 9:10, ‘if you confess with your lips that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved.’ For these Christians faith in Christ alone is the basis of Christian identity and it applies equally to Jews and Gentiles.

---

23 In his later epistles, Paul actually claims that his version of the gospel was directly conveyed to him by the risen Christ (cf. Gal 1:1, 11–16), but it is more likely that he learnt it from the Hellenists.

It was inevitable that such different understandings of Christian identity would lead to conflict. At some point in the late 40s the Christian Jewish community in Jerusalem sent emissaries to Antioch with the message that the Gentile Christians there could not be saved unless they were circumcised according to the Law of Moses (Acts 15:1).<sup>24</sup> It was decided that the Antiochene community would send delegates to Jerusalem to discuss with the leaders of that church the very issue of Christian identity, especially with regard to Gentile converts. Did Gentiles need to convert to Judaism and observe the Law as an integral part of their Christian commitment, or was faith in Christ alone sufficient for their full participation in the Christian community? The delegation from Antioch, comprising Paul, Barnabas, and some others, duly travelled to Jerusalem where they met with the pillar apostles, James the brother of Jesus and the disciples Peter and John. This meeting is known somewhat anachronistically as the apostolic council, and our sources preserve two accounts of the proceedings. One is from Paul himself in Galatians 2:1–10, and the other is a later version supplied in Acts 15:4–39. Despite significant differences between the two accounts, they both agree that the Antiochene position won the day. Paul, Barnabas, and their comrades convinced the Jerusalem authorities that Gentile Christians need not be circumcised and, by extension, need not convert to Judaism. There are, however, serious difficulties with both of these versions of events.<sup>25</sup> We need not dwell on these problems here. Whatever happened at the Jerusalem meeting, even if the Jerusalem church accepted the validity of the Antiochene Gentile mission, the issue was not completely settled and it soon arose again in Antioch. Paul provides a telling account of this incident in Galatians 2:11–14.

Soon after the Jerusalem meeting, Peter travelled to Antioch and happily ate with the Gentile Christians there until the arrival of certain men who had been sent by James. Upon their arrival and fearing ‘those of the circumcision’, Peter withdrew from table-fellowship with the Gentiles. His actions were followed by Barnabas and the remainder of the Jews in the Antiochene community. Paul was furious over this turn of events and openly confronted Peter and accused him of hypocrisy. How could Peter live like a Gentile and not like a Jew and yet compel the Gentiles to live like Jews? Although scholars vary widely over the precise meaning of these events, the simplest explanation is that the men from James came with the very same message that James had

24 For the background to this intervention by the Jerusalem church see Sim, *Matthew and Christian Judaism*, 80–82; and Elmer, *Paul, Jerusalem and the Judaizers*, 82–95.

25 See Sim, *Matthew and Christian Judaism*, 82–92; and Elmer, *Paul, Jerusalem and the Judaizers*, 96–104.

sent earlier to Antioch that had led to the apostolic council. In order to be full members of the Christian community rather than God-fearers on the periphery, Gentile Christians were required to be circumcised and obey the Mosaic law. Only this interpretation makes sense of Paul's charge of hypocrisy against Peter that, in accordance with the wishes of James' emissaries, he was now compelling Gentiles to live as Jews.<sup>26</sup> It is generally agreed that Paul lost the battle at Antioch. He left his base of a dozen years and moved westward where he continued to preach his distinctive Christian message to Gentiles in Asia Minor and Greece.

But despite putting considerable distance between himself and Antioch, Paul's troubles with the Jerusalem church did not end there. His letter to the Galatians spells out that certain Christian Jews representing the Jerusalem church were both questioning Paul's apostleship and trying to convince his Gentile converts to circumcise themselves (if male) and to observe the Torah.<sup>27</sup> Moreover, the two letters to the Corinthians also testify to interference in that community by further agents of the Jerusalem church,<sup>28</sup> and there is good evidence as well that a similar scenario was being played out in Philippi or was expected to occur in the near future.<sup>29</sup> Whether or not Paul and the leaders of the Jerusalem church were ever reconciled is doubtful. The sole evidence we have with regards to this issue is that of the collection. Paul tells us that at the meeting in Jerusalem in the late 40s he had agreed to collect monies from the Gentile churches to be given to 'the poor' in Jerusalem (Gal 2:10). Perhaps as a strategy to restore relations with James and the other leaders, Paul planned to take this money to Jerusalem soon after writing the letter to the Romans (Rom 15:25–28). While we have no definitive evidence as to the fate of the collection, it is more likely than not that the Jerusalem community rejected the donations from the Gentile churches.<sup>30</sup> It is significant that Luke, who devotes a large amount of space to Paul's final visit to the Jewish capital (Acts 21:15–23:30), never mentions the collection at all. Had it been accepted then we would expect him to have referred to it, since much of his agenda

26 For full discussion of this event see Sim, *Matthew and Christian Judaism*, 92–100; and Elmer, *Paul, Jerusalem and the Judaizers*, 104–10.

27 See Elmer, *Paul, Jerusalem and the Judaizers*, 131–62; and J.L. Martyn, *Galatians: A New Translation with an Introduction and Commentary*, Anchor Bible, vol. 33A (New York: Doubleday, 1998), 117–26 and 447–66.

28 Elmer, *Paul, Jerusalem and the Judaizers*, 165–88; and M.D. Goulder, *Paul and the Competing Mission in Corinth* (Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson, 2001).

29 Elmer, *Paul, Jerusalem and the Judaizers*, 188–96.

30 Elmer, *Paul, Jerusalem and the Judaizers*, 206–12; and Dunn, *Beginning from Jerusalem*, 970–72.

in Acts is to demonstrate the basic unity of the various Christian communities. His complete silence concerning the very reason for Paul's visit is more likely an attempt to suppress the real story that Paul's offering was refused (cf. Acts 24:17). According to various Christian traditions, Paul, Peter, and James died as martyrs in the early 60s, and it is probable that they met their deaths without ever being reconciled. The divisions between these early Christians over law-observance and its place in Christian identity continued into the late first century and beyond. They appear in James, the pastoral epistles, and the letters of Ignatius of Antioch.<sup>31</sup>

#### 4 Christian Identity in the Gospel of Matthew

The Gospel of Matthew, written in the latter part of the first century,<sup>32</sup> was thus composed at a time when the issues surrounding Christian identity were still very much a live issue. Where did the evangelist and intended readers stand with regard to the divisions in the early Christian movement? Were they of the Pauline view that Christian identity was marked simply by faith in Christ alone and that there was no longer any distinction between Jew and Gentile? Or did they hold the alternative position of the Jerusalem church that being a follower of Christ also involved being Jewish? An examination of the Gospel evidence reveals that Matthew and his community stood firmly within the Christian Jewish tradition of the original church in Jerusalem. Like the earlier church of James, Peter, and John, the Matthean community still maintained the fundamental distinction between Jew and Gentile, and they expected that Gentiles needed to become Jews and observe the Torah in order to be saved.

In the last two decades or so, Matthean scholarship has been dominated by the *intra muros/extra muros* debate. This debate considered the fundamental issue as to whether Matthew's community considered itself still to be a part of Judaism in the fluid and turbulent environment following the Jewish war of 66–70 CE, or whether it had parted company with the religion of Judaism. Following the seminal works of J.A. Overman and A.J. Saldarini, I argued long ago that the Matthean community should be viewed as a Christian sect or movement within Judaism,<sup>33</sup> and this view has now emerged as the dominant

31 For discussion of these texts see Sim, *Matthew and Christian Judaism*, 172–81 and 257–82.

32 On dating Matthew see Sim, *Matthew and Christian Judaism*, 40–62.

33 Sim, *Matthew and Christian Judaism*, 109–63. See too J.A. Overman, *Matthew's Gospel and Formative Judaism: The Social World of the Matthean Community* (Minneapolis, Minn.:



hypothesis in the field.<sup>34</sup> The major evidence for this thesis concerns the Torah in Matthew's Gospel. Once again after decades of debate most scholars have arrived at the conclusion that Matthew and his target audience observed the Mosaic law as an integral component of their Christian affiliation and identity. This is most clearly attested in Matthew 5:17–19 at the beginning of the Sermon on the Mount. In these programmatic statements about the relevance and importance of the Torah, the Matthean Jesus makes a number of clear and fundamental points. The coming of Jesus the messiah does not abolish the law but rather fulfils it. The Torah will remain in operation until the end of the age, and in the meantime the followers of Jesus are expected to obey each and every aspect of the law. Finally, those who obey even the least of the commandments and teach others to do so will be rewarded, while those who disobey them and teach others to follow suit will receive no such reward.<sup>35</sup> Following these formative and general statements, the Gospel makes clear that the law must be obeyed in accordance with the interpretation laid down by Jesus himself. Matthew's interpretation of the Torah is complex and cannot be dealt with here in any great detail,<sup>36</sup> but the basic points can be summarised as follows.

While the Matthean Jesus accepts that every part of the law is valid and is to be obeyed, he nonetheless differentiates between the more important and less important parts of the Torah. The great commandments are love of God (Deut 6:5) and love of neighbour (Lev 19:18), and the remainder of the law hangs on these two fundamental rules (Matt 22:34–40). The love of neighbour as an integral aspect of the Torah appears again in Matthew 19:18–19, and in the Golden Rule of 7:12 where the law and the prophets can be summarised by the principle of treating others as one would wish to be treated by them. In another

---

Fortress Press, 1990); and A.J. Saldarini, *Matthew's Christian-Jewish Community* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994).

34 See the review of this debate in D.C. Sim, "Matthew: The Current State of Research," in *Mark and Matthew 1. Comparative Readings: Understanding the Earliest Gospels in their First-Century Settings*, ed. E.-M. Becker and A. Runesson, WUNT 1, vol. 271 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2011), 36–40.

35 For analysis of these verses, see Sim, *Matthew and Christian Judaism*, 124–27.

36 Excellent and very detailed analyses of Matthew's understanding of the Torah can be found in W.R.G. Loader, *Jesus' Attitude Towards the Law*, WUNT 2 vol. 97 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1997) 137–272; and B. Repschinski, *Nicht auszulösen, sondern zu erfüllen: Das jüdische Gesetz in den synoptischen Jesuserzählungen*, FzB, Bd 120 (Würzburg: Echter, 2009), 57–141. For less detailed discussions see Sim, *Matthew and Christian Judaism*, 123–39; and K. Snodgrass, "Matthew and the Law," in *Treasures New and Old: Contributions to Matthean Studies*, ed. D.R. Bauer and M.A. Powell (Atlanta, Ga: Scholars Press, 1996), 99–127.



important text, Matthew's Jesus accuses the Pharisees of rightly observing the tithe, but of neglecting the weightier matters of the law, which are defined as justice, mercy, and faithfulness (Matt 23:23). The importance of mercy finds expression in the two Sabbath controversy stories where the point is made that merciful actions outweigh strict observance of the Sabbath rest (Matt 12:1–14). In order to illustrate further how the overriding principles of love and mercy work in concrete situations, Matthew provides a number of examples in the so-called Antitheses (Matt 5:21–48) where Jesus intensifies the demands of the Mosaic law. The prohibition against killing is best fulfilled by not getting angry in the first place; the command not to commit adultery is kept by not giving in initially to lustful thoughts; and so on.

We may infer from the evangelist's presentation of the Torah in his gospel that he and his target readers believed that the coming of the Christ had not rendered invalid the ancient laws of Moses. Every part of the Torah, even the least of its commandments, was to be obeyed in full until the end of the current age. Jesus himself had provided the Torah with its definitive interpretation by emphasising the double love command, which basically classified the law into two distinct categories, the weighty and the lesser commands. The more important elements were love, mercy, justice, and faithfulness, while the ceremonial or ritual requirements belonged to the less important parts of the Torah. All parts of the law were to be followed when possible, but when there was a clash between upholding a weightier law or fulfilling a lesser commandment, then the former had priority. Unlike Paul who believed that the ritual elements no longer had a place in the Christian tradition, Matthew relativises these parts of the law. They must be followed when possible (see Matt 5:17–19), but they can be dispensed with if in doing so a weightier law is fulfilled.<sup>37</sup>

The fact that Matthew's community followed the Torah according to the definitive interpretation of Jesus the messiah affected its relationship with other Jewish groups and other Christian groups, and this in turn helps to establish the self-identification of the Matthean community. We shall begin with the Jewish issue first. It is well-known that Matthew's Gospel is heavily critical of the scribes and Pharisees, and this polemic comes to a climax in the speech

---

37 For discussion of the different views on the Torah held by Matthew and Paul see R. Mohrlang, *Matthew and Paul: A Comparison of Ethical Perspectives*, SNTSMS, vol. 48 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982), 7–47; and D.C. Sim, "Paul and Matthew on the Torah: Theory and Practice," in *Paul Grace and Freedom: Essays in Honour of John K. Riches*, ed. P. Middleton, A. Paddison, and K. Wenell (London: T & T Clark, 2009), 50–64.

in chapter 23.<sup>38</sup> This is usually explained by the proposition that Matthew's Christian group was in conflict with and was perhaps being persecuted by Formative Judaism which was led by the scribes and Pharisees after the Jewish war.<sup>39</sup> The evangelist has thus retrojected a current conflict back into his narrative about Jesus. The issues that underlay this conflict are clear. First, the scribes and Pharisees did not accept the christological claims by Matthew's group concerning Jesus as the prophesied Davidic messiah, and they countered with their claims that Jesus was a deceiver in league with Satan (cf. Matt 9:34; 10:25; and 12:24, 27–28).<sup>40</sup> Secondly, the Pharisees criticised the manner in which the Matthean community observed the Torah, preferring instead their own ancient oral tradition known as the traditions of the fathers (or the elders) as the correct interpretive tool. Many of the conflict stories in the Gospel surround the correct interpretation of the Mosaic law (Matt 12:1–14; 15:1–20; and 22:34–40; cf. 23:23).<sup>41</sup> The issue over the proper and authoritative understanding of the Torah was a source of tension and conflict between many Jewish groups in the first century, and this particular example between the scribes and Pharisees and Matthew's group should be read in that context.

The upshot of this is that the evangelist makes the point that merely being Jewish and obeying the Mosaic law is not sufficient for salvation (see Matt 3:9). One also needs to accept Jesus as the messiah who fulfilled the ancient prophecies, and follow the Torah according to his messianic interpretation. In other words, merely belonging to the covenant people is no longer enough in the light of the coming of the messiah; one must also believe that Jesus of Nazareth was the messiah and observe the Law as he directed. As was the case with the Jerusalem church, salvation is possible only for those who are both Jewish and Christian.

We may now turn to the question of the Gentiles and Matthew's understanding of Christian identity. The topic of the Gentiles in Matthew's narrative and their status within Matthew's community has been heavily debated for

38 For discussion of the evidence and the relevant texts see Sim, *Matthew and Christian Judaism*, 118–20.

39 See the definitive studies in Overman, *Matthew's Gospel, passim*; B. Repschinski, *The Controversy Stories in the Gospel of Matthew: Their Redaction, Form and Relevance for the Relationship Between the Matthean Community and Formative Judaism*, FRLANT, vol. 189 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2000), *passim*; Sim, *Matthew and Christian Judaism*, 109–63; and Saldarini, *Matthew's Christian-Jewish Community*, 44–67.

40 See the excellent discussion of this point in G.N. Stanton, *A Gospel for a New People: Studies in Matthew* (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1992), 171–85.

41 On the Matthean controversy stories see especially Repschinski, *Controversy Stories*, 62–342.

decades.<sup>42</sup> While it was once commonly thought that Matthew's Gospel was very pro-Gentile, the tide has turned somewhat and most scholars now accept that the Gentile characters in the narrative are a mixture of both good and evil.<sup>43</sup> Furthermore, it is now accepted that a number of anti-Gentile statements in the Gospel (Matt 5:46–47; 6:7–8, 31–32; 7:6; and 18:15–17) need to be given more weight in determining Matthew's attitude towards the Gentile world.<sup>44</sup> Our immediate concern here, however, is the status of the Gentiles in the Matthean community. What was the process of Gentile conversion to this Christian community, and what were their obligations following conversion?

In terms of the process of conversion, if we give full weight to the demand of Jesus in 5:17–19 that his followers must obey all parts of the Mosaic law, then we must conclude that male Gentile converts would have to undergo circumcision, and all converts would need to observe the Torah according to Jesus' interpretation. In other words, Gentiles who wished to join Matthew's Christian Jewish community would need to become proselytes before they could become true followers of Jesus the messiah. Needless to say, other scholars disagree with this conclusion by highlighting an alternative text. These scholars argue that the terms of admission to the Matthean community are clearly spelt out in the Gospel's concluding pericope (Matt 28:16–20). In this climactic passage the risen Lord appears to the disciples on a mountain in Galilee, stating that all authority in heaven and on earth has been given to him. He then overturns his earlier restriction of the mission to the Jews alone (cf. Matt 10:5–6; and 15:24) and commands the disciples to evangelise all the nations by baptising them in the name of the Father, the Son, and Holy Spirit and by teaching them to observe all that he has commanded. Since the only initiatory rite mentioned is baptism and not circumcision, it is argued that in the post-resurrection period baptism has replaced circumcision. On this reading of the text, Gentiles become Christian by submitting to baptism alone and they are exempt from the ritual demands of the law.<sup>45</sup>

---

42 See the recent review of this subject in D.C. Sim, "The Attitude to Gentiles in the Gospel of Matthew," in Sim and McLaren, *Attitudes to Gentiles in Ancient Judaism and Early Christianity*, 173–90.

43 Sim, *Matthew and Christian Judaism*, 216–26.

44 *Ibid.*, 226–31.

45 See, for example, W.D. Davies and D.C. Allison, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Gospel according to Saint Matthew*, ICC (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1997), 685; J. Riches, *Conflicting Mythologies: Identity Formation in the Gospels of Mark and Matthew*, SNTW (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 2000), 216–22; and M. Konradt, *Israel, Kirche und der Völker im Matthäusevangelium*, WUNT 1, vol. 215 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2007), 343–44.

This view, however, is problematic. It focuses too much on the ritual of baptism and overlooks the other requirements of the risen Lord. The new disciples must of course be baptised but they are also to be taught everything that Jesus commanded. This includes his teaching on the Torah. As noted above, all parts of the Torah are to be obeyed until the *parousia*, and this must include circumcision for male Gentile converts. But if that is the case, then why does the evangelist not mention circumcision in this universal mission charge? The most plausible answer is that there was no necessity to mention circumcision, since it is presumed on the basis of Matthew 5:17–19.<sup>46</sup> The specifically Christian rite of baptism is referred to because it is a new initiatory ritual, applicable to both Jew and Gentile, that had not been mentioned previously in the narrative. Thus Matthew 28:19 spells out one universal mission but two distinct pathways for converts. Jewish converts who are already circumcised and law-observant must submit to baptism and then be instructed in the teachings of Jesus. Gentile converts, however, require an extra step. They must first proselytise to Judaism by accepting circumcision and the Torah, and only then could they be baptised and given instruction on the teachings of Jesus.

This reading of the Great Commission is supported by a further important but neglected text, Matthew 7:21–23.<sup>47</sup> In this passage found near the end of the Sermon on the Mount, the evangelist defines with great clarity that following Jesus involves more than faith in his messiahship and lordship; it also requires obedience to the Torah. Here the Matthean Jesus speaks in his capacity as the final judge (cf. Matt 25:31–46), and makes clear that not everyone who addresses him as ‘Lord’ will enter the kingdom of heaven. On the day of judgement, many will appeal to Jesus, confessing him as Lord and claiming that they performed mighty works in his name, but Jesus will dismiss them utterly. He will declare to them, ‘I never knew you; depart from me you workers of lawlessness (οἱ ἐργαζόμενοι τὴν ἀνομίαν).’ These people who beseech Jesus are clearly Christians. They profess Jesus as Lord and perform miracles in his name. But Jesus will denounce them none the less, and his reason is clear.

46 So Sim, *Matthew and Christian Judaism*, 247–54; idem, “Matthew, Paul and the Origin and Nature of the Gentile Mission: The Great Commission in Matthew 28:16–20 as an Anti-Pauline Tradition,” *HTS Theologisches Studien* 64 (2008): 377–92; A. Runesson, “Judging Gentiles in the Gospel of Matthew: Between ‘Othering’ and Inclusion,” in *Jesus, Matthew’s Gospel and Early Christianity: Studies in Memory of Graham N. Stanton*, ed. D.M. Gurtner, J. Willitts, and R. Burridge, LNTS, vol. 435 (London: T & T Clark International, 2011), 146 and 150; and, most recently, B.L. White, “The Eschatological Conversion of ‘All the Nations’ in Matthew 28.19–20: (Mis)reading Matthew through Paul,” *JSNT* 36 (2014): 357–58.

47 For a more detailed analysis of this pericope see D.C. Sim, “Matthew 7:21–23: Further Evidence of Its Anti-Pauline Perspective,” *NTS* 53 (2007): 325–43.

These Christians have not followed the Law as Jesus had demanded earlier in the Sermon in Matthew 5:17–19. This key text spells out with absolute clarity Matthew's understanding of Christian identity in terms of Gentile converts, and reveals just how much he differed from Paul on this issue. Simply professing faith in Jesus as messiah and Lord is not sufficient to make one a Christian. In addition to faith in Jesus, one also has to be a Jew and follow the Mosaic law. The Matthean Jesus will exclude law-free Christians from the kingdom in the same manner as he will exclude Jews who do not follow Jesus. As noted above, one has to be both a Christian and a Jew. One without the other is insufficient.

## 5 Conclusions

This short study of Christian identity in the Gospel of Matthew has necessitated a number of detours into the question of identity in contemporary Judaism and the complex issues concerning Christian identity in the early Christian movement. It reached the conclusion that the position of Matthew stood very much in the tradition of the original Jerusalem church. While the revelation of the messiah had not replaced the traditional Jewish identity markers, it had supplemented them. Salvation was possible only for Jews, but only for those Jews who accepted Jesus as the prophesied messiah. Non-Christian Jews were excluded. With regard to Gentile converts, these people too required faith in Jesus but they were expected to proselytise and join the covenant people as an integral part of their Christian affiliation. Non-Jewish Christians were also excluded from salvation. For Matthew, as it had been for the Jerusalem church, it was a case of both/and rather than either/or. Christian identity involved both being Jewish and being a follower of the Jewish messiah.

## Bibliography

- Cassius Dio. *Historia Romana* (English translation in Earnest Cary and Herbert B. Foster, *Dio Cassius: Roman History*, 9 vols, LCL. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1914–1927).
- Josephus. *Antiquitates Judaicae* (English translation in H.St.J. Thackeray, Ralph Marcus, Allen Wikgren, and Louis H. Feldman, *Josephus*, vols 5–13: *Jewish Antiquities*, LCL. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1930–1965).
- . *Contra Apionem* (English translation in H.St.J. Thackeray, *Josephus*, vol. 1: *The Life, Against Apion*, LCL. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1926).
- . *De bello Iudaico* (English translation in H.St.J. Thackeray, *Josephus*, vols 2–4: *The Jewish War*, LCL. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1927–1928).

- Juvenal. *Saturae* (English translation in Susanna Morton Braund, *Juvenal and Persius*, LCL. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2004).
- Philo. *De legatione ad Gaium* (English translation in J.W. Earp, *Philo*, vol. 10: *Embassy to Gaius, Indices to Volumes 1–X*, LCL. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1962).
- . *De somniis* (English translation in F.H. Colson and G.H. Whitaker, *Philo*, vol. 5: *On Flight and Finding, On the Change of Names, On Dreams*, LCL. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1934).
- . *De specialibus legibus* (English translation in F.H. Colson, *Philo*, vol. 7: *On the Decalogue, On the Special Laws, Books 1–3*, and vol. 8: *On the Special Laws, Book 4, On the Virtues, On Rewards and Punishments*, LCL. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1937–1939).
- . *De uirtutibus* (English translation in F.H. Colson, *Philo*, vol. 8: *On the Special Laws, Book 4, On the Virtues, On Rewards and Punishments*, LCL. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1939).
- Plutarch. *Cicero* (English translation in Bernadotte Perrin, *Plutarch: Lives*, vol. 7: *Demosthenes and Cicero. Alexander and Caesar*, LCL. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1919).
- Tacitus. *Historiae* (English translation in Clifford H. Moore and John Jackson, *Tacitus: Histories*, 2 vols, LCL. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1925–1931).
- Campbell, W.S. *Paul and the Creation of Christian Identity*. London: T & T Clark, 2006.
- Cohen, S.J.D. *From the Maccabees to the Mishnah*, Library of Early Christianity. Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1987.
- . *The Beginnings of Jewishness: Boundaries, Varieties, Uncertainties*, Hellenistic Culture and Society, vol. 31. Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1999.
- Davies, W.D., and D.C. Allison. *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Gospel according to Saint Matthew*, ICC. Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1997.
- Donaldson, T.L. *Judaism and the Gentiles: Patterns of Universalism (to 135 CE)*. Waco, Tex.: Baylor University Press, 2008.
- Dunn, J.D.G. *Christianity in the Making*, vol. 2: *Beginning From Jerusalem*. Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 2009.
- Elmer, I.J. *Paul, Jerusalem and the Judaizers: The Galatian Crisis in its Broadest Historical Context*, WUNT 2, vol. 258. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2009.
- Feldman, L.H. *Jew and Gentile in the Ancient World: Attitudes and Interactions from Alexander to Justinian*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993.
- Goulder, M.D. *Paul and the Competing Mission in Corinth*. Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson, 2001.
- Hagner, D.A. “Another Look at the ‘Parting of the Ways.’” In *Earliest Christian History*, edited by M.F. Bird and J. Matson, WUNT 2, vol. 320, 381–427. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2012.

- Holmberg, B. "Jewish *versus* Christian Identity?" *RB* 105 (1998): 397–425.
- , ed. *Exploring Early Christian Identity*, WUNT 1, vol. 226. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2008.
- Holmberg, B., and M. Winninge, eds. *Identity Formation in the New Testament*, WUNT 1, vol. 227. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2008.
- Hvalvik, R., and K. Sandnes. *Early Christian Prayer and Identity Formation*, WUNT 1, vol. 336. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2014.
- Konradt, M. *Israel, Kirche und der Völker im Matthäusevangelium*, WUNT 1, vol. 215. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2007.
- Levinskaya, I. *The Book of Acts in Its First Century Setting*, vol. 5: *Diaspora Setting*. Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 1996.
- Lieu, J.M. *Neither Jew nor Greek: Constructing Early Christianity*, SNTW. Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 2002.
- Loader, W.R.G. *Jesus' Attitude towards the Law*, WUNT 2, vol. 97. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1997.
- Martyn, J.L. *Galatians: A New Translation with an Introduction and Commentary*, Anchor Bible, vol. 33A. New York: Doubleday, 1998.
- Milgrom, J.S. "Religious Conversion and the Revolt Model for the Formation of Israel." *JBL* 101 (1982): 169–76.
- Mohrlang, R. *Matthew and Paul: A Comparison of Ethical Perspectives*, SNTSMS, vol. 48. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982.
- Overman, J.A. *Matthew's Gospel and Formative Judaism: The Social World of the Matthean Community*. Minneapolis, Minn.: Fortress Press, 1990.
- Repschinski, B. *The Controversy Stories in the Gospel of Matthew: Their Redaction, Form and Relevance for the Relationship between the Matthean Community and Formative Judaism*, FRLANT, vol. 189. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2000.
- . *Nicht auzulösen, sondern zu erfüllen: Das jüdische Gesetz in den synoptischen Jesuserzählungen*, FzB, vol. 120. Würzburg: Echter, 2009.
- Riches, J. *Conflicting Mythologies: Identity Formation in the Gospels of Mark and Matthew*, SNTW. Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 2000.
- Runesson, A. "Judging Gentiles in the Gospel of Matthew: Between 'Othering' and Inclusion." In *Jesus, Matthew's Gospel and Early Christianity: Studies in Memory of Graham N. Stanton*, edited by D.M. Gurtner, J. Willitts, and R. Burridge, LNTS, vol. 435, 133–51. London: T & T Clark International, 2011.
- Saldarini, A.J. *Matthew's Christian-Jewish Community*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994.
- Sim, D.C. "Christianity and Ethnicity in the Gospel of Matthew." In *Ethnicity and the Bible*, edited by M.G. Brett, 171–95. Leiden: Brill, 1996.
- . *The Gospel of Matthew and Christian Judaism: The History and Social Setting of the Matthean Community*, SNTW. Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1998.



- . “Christian Judaism: A Reconstruction and Evaluation of the Original Christian Tradition.” In *Themes in Jewish-Christian Relations*, edited by E. Kessler and M.J. Wright, 39–58. Cambridge: Orchard Academic, 2005.
- . “Matthew 7:21–23: Further Evidence of Its Anti-Pauline Perspective.” *NTS* 53 (2007): 325–43.
- . “Matthew, Paul and the Origin and Nature of the Gentile Mission: The Great Commission in Matthew 28:16–20 as an Anti-Pauline Tradition.” *HTS Theologisches Studien/Theological Studies* 64 (2008): 377–92.
- . “Paul and Matthew on the Torah: Theory and Practice.” In *Paul, Grace and Freedom: Essays in Honour of John K. Riches*, edited by P. Middleton, A. Paddison, and K. Wenell, 50–64. London: T & T Clark, 2009.
- . “Matthew: The Current State of Research.” In *Mark and Matthew I. Comparative Readings: Understanding the Earliest Gospels in their First-Century Settings*, edited by E.-M. Becker and A. Runesson, WUNT 1, vol. 271, 33–51. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2011.
- . “Gentiles, God-Fearers and Proselytes.” In *Attitudes to Gentiles in Ancient Judaism and Early Christianity*, edited by D.C. Sim and J.S. McLaren, LNTS, vol. 499, 9–27. London: Bloomsbury T & T Clark, 2013.
- . “The Attitude to Gentiles in the Gospel of Matthew.” In *Attitudes to Gentiles in Ancient Judaism and Early Christianity*, edited by D.C. Sim and J.S. McLaren, LNTS, vol. 499, 173–90. London: Bloomsbury T & T Clark, 2013.
- Snodgrass, K. “Matthew and the Law.” In *Treasures New and Old: Contributions to Matthean Studies*, edited by D.R. Bauer and M.A. Powell, 99–127. Atlanta, Ga.: Scholars Press, 1996.
- Stanton, G.N. *A Gospel for a New People: Studies in Matthew*. Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1992.
- Wander, B. *Gottesfürchtige und Sympathisanten: Studien zum heidnischen Umfeld von Diasporasynagogen*, WUNT 1, vol. 104. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1998.
- White, B.L. “The Eschatological Conversion of ‘All the Nations’ in Matthew 28.19–20: (Mis)reading Matthew through Paul.” *JSNT* 36 (2014): 353–82.
- Zetterholm, M., and S. Byrskog, eds. *The Making of Christianity: Conflicts, Contacts and Constructions: Essays in Honour of Bengt Holmberg*, CBNTS, vol. 47. Winona Lake, Ind.: Eisenbrauns, 2012.



# Die Herkunft der Christen in der *Apologie* des Aristides: Baustein zu einem Kommentar

*Michael Lattke*

## 1 Einleitung

Am Anfang des vierten Jahrhunderts schrieb Eusebius in seiner *Kirchengeschichte* (4.3.3) die folgenden Sätze:

καὶ Ἀριστείδης δέ, πιστὸς ἀνὴρ τῆς καθ' ἡμᾶς ὀρμώμενος εὐσεβείας, τῷ Κοδράτῳ παραπλησίως ὑπὲρ τῆς πίστεως ἀπολογία ἐπιφωνήσας Ἀδριανῶ καταλέλοιπεν· σῶζεται δέ γε εἰς δεῦρο παρὰ πλείστοις καὶ ἡ τούτου γραφή.

Aristides von Athen, nicht zu verwechseln mit dem Redner der zweiten Sophistik Aelius Aristides (117–181), richtete seine *Apologie* wahrscheinlich nicht an Kaiser Hadrian (117–138), sondern an seinen Nachfolger Antoninus Pius (138–161) in den frühen vierziger Jahren des zweiten Jahrhunderts. In den ersten Jahrzehnten dieses Jahrhunderts war das Christentum noch dabei, seine Identität innerhalb der griechisch-römischen Welt zu finden.

Für die im Verlag Herder (Freiburg im Breisgau) mit Ergänzungsbänden (KfA.E) erscheinende Reihe ‚Kommentar zu frühchristlichen Apologeten‘ (KfA) bearbeite ich diese *Apologie* und freue mich, dass ich zu Ehren meiner gelehrten Kollegin Pauline Allen einen weiteren Baustein zu meinem Kommentar veröffentlichen darf.

In der *Apologie* des Aristides werden die Christen weder als καινὸν γένος (Diog 1) noch als τρίτον γένος (KerPetr 2) bezeichnet, sondern rangieren als καινὸν ἔθνος (16,3b) an letzter Stelle der vier menschlichen γένη Barbaren, Griechen, Juden und Christen (2,2a.4i). Ich werde hier den Abschnitt 2,4a–h in synoptischer Weise neu übersetzen und kommentieren. Außer einigen Papyrusfragmenten (zu 5,1–6,1 und 15,4a–16,2b) gibt es keine griechische Handschrift der *Apologie*. In vielen Fällen lässt sich aber der griechische Wortlaut von Begriffen und Phrasen rekonstruieren.

Obwohl der Barlaam-Roman schon längst bekannt war, begann die moderne Kenntnis der *Apologie* des Aristides erst im Jahre 1878 mit der sensationellen

Veröffentlichung einer armenischen Teilübersetzung (Ar), die nach der Adresse „An den Imperator Adrianus Cäsar: von dem Philosophen Aristides aus Athen“ die ersten beiden Kapitel samt dem Zusatz 2,4k enthält. Noch sensationeller war das Auftauchen einer syrischen Übersetzung (Sy), die J. Rendel Harris in der Sinai-Sammelhandschrift Nr. 16 entdeckte und 1891 mit englischer Übersetzung herausgab. Gleichzeitig wurde von J. Armitage Robinson erkannt, dass ein griechischer Text der *Apologie* beim Übersetzen des Barlaam-Romans aus dem Altgeorgischen ins Griechische benutzt (nicht wörtlich zitiert!) und in Kapitel 27 (= Ba 27,1–295) dem Asketen Ναχῶρ in den Mund gelegt wurde, allerdings ohne Nennung des Autors (Aristides) oder des wirklichen Titels. Aus Sy lässt sich der ursprüngliche Titel folgendermaßen herstellen: „[Der Adressat ist] der Weltherrscher Caesar Titus Hadrianus Antoninus [Pius], von dem Philosophen der Athener Markianos Aristides.“

## 2 Gliederung und Inhalt der *Apologie*

Kapitel 1 gliedert sich in zwei Teile: Erkenntnis Gottes (1,1a–2b) und Umschreibung Gottes (1,2c–k). In beiden Teilen ist der Text von Ar und Sy sehr viel umfangreicher als derjenige von Ba.

Kapitel 2 behandelt nach einer einleitenden Bemerkung (2,1) über Wahrheit (ἀλήθεια) und Irrtum (πλάνη) Zahl, Herkunft und Eigenart der schon genannten vier Menschengeschlechter (2,2a–4i). Die Vierzahl in Ar und Sy hat Vorrang vor der auch sonst abweichenden Dreizahl in Ba.

Kapitel 3–7 bieten eine Charakterisierung und Beurteilung der Chaldäer (Ba) bzw. Barbaren (Sy). In Kapitel 3 wird die Verehrung der vergänglichen Elemente und Götterbilder als Irrtum angeprangert, in Kapitel 4–5 geht es um die einzelnen στοιχεία Erde, Wasser, Feuer und Wehen der Winde, wobei die Behandlung des Himmels (4,2a–f [Ba 27,41–50]) als Zusatz von Ba anzusehen ist. Kapitel 6–7 stellen heraus, dass auch Sonne (6,1), Mond (6,2) und Mensch (7,1) keine Götter sind. Es folgt ein Schlussurteil über den Irrtum der Chaldäer bzw. Barbaren (7,2).

Kapitel 8–11 enthalten eine erste Charakterisierung und Beurteilung der Griechen. Auf Einleitung (8,1a) und allgemeine Charakterisierung der Götter der Griechen (8,1b–2c) folgt die Darstellung der einzelnen θεοί Kronos, Zeus und Aphrodite (9,1–3), Hephaistos, Hermes, Asklepios, Ares, Dionysos und Herakles (10,1–6), Apollon, Artemis, wiederum Aphrodite, Adonis, Rhea, Attis, Kore und Pluto (11,1–6, mit vielen Abweichungen zwischen Sy und Ba). Zusammenfassend wird der schlechte Einfluss der Griechen auf die ganze bewohnte Erde betont (11,7).

Kapitel 12 enthält eine Charakterisierung und Beurteilung der Ägypter, die in Kapitel 2 von Sy gar nicht genannt wurden. Im Anschluss an die allgemeine Einführung (12,1) geht Aristides ausführlich ein auf Isis und Osiris (12,2–3) und die Vergöttlichung von Tieren (12,4–5).

Kapitel 13 kommt auf die Griechen zurück, ihren Götzen- und Bilderdienst (13,1) sowie ihre Dichter und Philosophen (13,2–7). Wer mit den ποιηταί und φιλόσοφοι im Einzelnen gemeint ist, sagt Aristides nicht. Mythologische Handbücher und Sammlungen von Hymnen gab es zu seiner Zeit schon längst. Auch Lukian von Samosata, dessen Schriften eine fast zeitgenössische Fundgrube skeptischer Kritik sind, wird solche Kompendien benutzt haben.

Kapitel 14 knüpft an 2,3 an. Die schon dort genannten Juden (Ἰουδαῖοι) werden nun etwas ausführlicher charakterisiert und letztlich in ihrer Gotteserkenntnis als irrend beurteilt (14,4), obwohl ihr Monotheismus (14,3a) und ihre Menschenliebe (14,3b) lobend hervorgehoben werden.

Kapitel 15–17 schließen die *Apologie* ab mit einer Charakterisierung und positiven Beurteilung der Christen. Aristides hat ihren Schriften (γραφαι) entnommen, dass sie der ἀλήθεια näher sind als die übrigen ἔθνη (15,3a). Ihre Gotteserkenntnis und ihr Gottesglaube wird in Ba sozusagen trinitarisch angereichert (3b). Aus Gottes Geboten (ἐντολαί) werden in Ba „die Gebote ihres Herrn Jesus Christus,“ ihre Befolgung wird aber sowohl in Ba als auch in Sy eschatologisch begründet (3c). Die Befolgung der alt- und neutestamentlichen Gebote betrifft zunächst Ehe, Sexualität, Zeugnisgeben, fremdes Eigentum, Eltern, Nächste und Richten (4a). Die goldene Regel passt eigentlich nicht zu Götzenbildern und Götzenopfer-Speise (4b). Die Befolgung der Gebote betrifft auch Bedrücker und Feinde (4c). Sexuelle Reinheit wird wiederum eschatologisch begründet (5a). Das Verhalten gegenüber Knechten, Mägden und Kindern wird beleuchtet (5b), die Vermeidung der Anbetung fremder Götter und das Fehlen von Lüge hervorgehoben (6a). Beispiele gegenseitiger Liebe sind Sorge für Witwen und Schutz von Waisen (6b). Freigebigkeit und wahre Bruderliebe, besonders gegenüber Fremden, betreffen sicherlich auch Frauen (6c). Dasselbe gilt von Armen, um deren Begräbnisse sich die Christen kümmern (7a), von Gefangenen, deren Not sie lindern (7b), von Armen und Bedürftigen überhaupt, die sie durch eigenes Fasten unterstützen (7c). Die „Gebote ihres Messias“ fließen nun auch in Sy zusammen mit Gottes Geboten (8a). Gotteslob und Dank für Speise und Trank werden erwähnt (8b). Das eschatologisch begründete Verhalten der Christen beim Tode von frommen Erwachsenen (9a) und sündlosen Kindern (9b), aber auch von Sündern aus

den eigenen Reihen (9c) kommt zur Sprache. Die abschließende Bemerkung von Kapitel 15 über das Gesetz (νόμος) der Christen und ihren Wandel (9d) ist gleichzeitig Übergang zu Kapitel 16.

Auf die schwer zu verstehende Anfangsaussage von Kapitel 16 über die Christen als „solche, die Gott(er)kennen“ (1a) folgt eine wiederholende Aussage über ihr Verhältnis zur ἀλήθεια (1b; s.o. 15,3a) und eine zusammenfassende Bemerkung über ihre guten Werke (2a). Ihr Bemühen um Gerechtsein ist eng verbunden mit der Erwartung der Verheißungen ihres Messias (2b). Bezüglich ihrer Worte und Gebote folgt ein weiterer Hinweis auf ihre dem Kaiser empfohlenen γραφαί (3a; s.o. 15,3a). Die Wahrheit der Christen (ἀλήθεια τῶν Χριστιανῶν) konstituiert sie als neues Volk (καινὸν ἔθνος), wobei ebenfalls 15,3a in Erinnerung gerufen wird (3b). Die an den Kaiser gerichtete Aufforderung, ihre γραφαί zu lesen, bekräftigt Aristides mit seiner eigenen Überzeugung und seinem Mitteilungsdrang (4; 5a–b ist Sondergut von Ba). Auf die gewagte Behauptung, dass wegen des christlichen Gebets die Welt (noch) besteht (6a), folgt ein vernichtendes Urteil über die übrigen ἔθνη (6b), welche die ἀλήθεια nicht erkennen wollen (6c).

Kapitel 17 wurde in Ba drastisch gekürzt. Zusammenfassend erwähnt Aristides weitere Schriften (γραφαί) der Christen (17,1) sowie nochmals sexuelle Schandtaten der Griechen, die anscheinend auch den Christen vorgeworfen wurden (2a). Das Verhalten der Christen *coram veritate* gegenüber ihren Gegnern zielt darauf ab, dass letztere sich von ihrer πλάνη bekehren sollen (2b). Dies wird an einem Beispiel ausführlich erläutert (2c). Es folgt eine weltweite Seligpreisung des γένος der Christen (2d). Die Hoffnung auf Beendigung der antichristlichen Verleumdungen und auf wahre Gottesverehrung (3a) verbindet Aristides mit dem Wunsch, die Gegner mögen ἄφθαρτα ρήματα empfangen (3b) und so dem kommenden Endgericht entgehen (3c). Die subscriptio „Zu Ende ist die *Apologie* des Philosophen Aristides“ (Sy) fehlt natürlich in Ba.

### 3 Die Herkunft der Christen (2,4a–h)

Dieser im Vergleich mit 2,2c (Barbaren und Griechen) und 2,3 (Juden) ausführlichere Abschnitt, den der Barlaam-Übersetzer umgestellt (15,1a–2c) und dabei mehr oder weniger stark verändert hat, lässt sich wie folgt aufteilen: Herkunft der Christen (2,4a), Inkarnation (2,4b), Kraft des Evangeliums (2,4c), Jesus ein Hebräer (2,4d), die Zwölf (2,4e), Tod, Auferstehung und Himmelfahrt Jesu (2,4f), Weltmission (2,4g), Name der Christen (2,4h).

[Ba 15,1a–2c]	Sy	Ar
<p>[15,1a. Die Christen aber leiten sich ab/her (γενεαλογούνται) vom Herrn Jesus Christus.]</p> <p>[15,1b. Dieser aber wurde als „Sohn des höchsten Gottes“ bekannt (ὡμολόγηται); durch heiligen Geist vom Himmel herabgestiegen wegen der Erlösung der Menschen und aus einer heiligen Jungfrau geboren ungesät und unverdorben, nahm er Fleisch an und erschien Menschen, um sie vom polytheistischen Irrtum zurückzurufen.]</p>	<p>4a. Die Christen nun (be) rechnen den Anfang ihrer Religion von Jesus (dem) Christus an.</p> <p>4b. Und dieser wird der Sohn des hohen Gottes genannt. Und es wird gesagt, dass Gott vom Himmel herabgekommen ist und von einer hebräischen Jungfrau Fleisch (an)genommen und angezogen hat; und es wohnte in einer Frau der Sohn Gottes.</p>	<p>4a. Die Christen aber rechnen ihr Geschlecht von dem Herrn Jesus Christus an.</p> <p>4b. Er selbst ist des hocherbhabenen Gottes Sohn, der geoffenbart wurde durch den heiligen Geist—vom Himmel herabgestiegen— und von einer hebräischen Jungfrau geboren wurde, indem er seinen Körper angenommen hat von der Jungfrau und sich geoffenbart hat in der Natur der Menschlichkeit als Gottes Sohn,</p>
<p>[15,1d. Es steht dir frei, den Ruhm seiner Parusie aus der bei ihnen so genannten heiligen und evangelischen Schrift zu erkennen, König, wenn du (sie) lesen solltest (ἐάν ἐντύχης).]</p>	<p>4c. Dieses wird vom Evangelium gelehrt, das vor kurzer Zeit bei ihnen gesagt worden ist, das verkündigt wurde [und] durch das auch ihr, wenn ihr [es] lest, die Kraft verstehen werdet, die auf ihm ruht.</p>	<p>4c. welcher in seiner die frohe Botschaft bringenden Güte die ganze Welt sich erjagt hat durch sein lebensschaffendes Kerygma.</p>
	<p>4d. Dieser Jesus nun wurde aus dem Geschlecht der Hebräer geboren.</p>	<p>4d. Er ist es, welcher dem Körper nach geboren wurde aus dem Geschlecht der Hebräer, von der Gottesgebärerin, von der Jungfrau Mariam.</p>

[Ba 15,1a–2c]	Sy	Ar
[15,2a. Dieser hatte zwölf Jünger, . . . ]	4e. Er hatte aber zwölf Jünger, damit seine Oikonomia noch etwas vervollkommnet würde.	4e. Er wählte die zwölf Jünger, er, welcher durch seine der Oikonomia eigene, lichtspendende Wahrheit die ganze Welt lehrte;
[15,1c. Und, seine wunderbare Oikonomia vollendend, kostete er freiwillig den Tod durchs Kreuz gemäß der großen Oikonomia; nach drei Tagen aber kam er wieder zu Leben und stieg zum Himmel auf.]	4f. Dieser wurde von den Juden durchbohrt und starb und wurde begraben, und sie sagen, dass er nach drei Tagen auferstanden ist und aufgenommen wurde zum Himmel.	4f. und gekreuzigt wurde er, angenagelt von den Juden; und auferweckt von den Toten stieg er auf zum Himmel.
[15,2a . . . die nach seinem Himmelsaufstieg in die Herrschaftsgebiete der Oikumene hinauszogen und die Majestät von jenem lehrten.]	4g. Und danach gingen diese zwölf Jünger in die bekannten Teile der Welt und lehrten über die Majestät von jenem in aller Demut/Milde[?] und Würde/Bescheidenheit[?].	4g. Und nachdem er die Jünger in die ganze Oikumene sandte und alle lehrte durch göttliche und von hoher Weisheit zeugende Wunder,
[15,2c. Deshalb werden diejenigen, die noch jetzt der Gerechtigkeit ihres Kerygmas dienen, Christen genannt.]	4h. Und deshalb werden auch diejenigen, die heute [noch] diesem Kerygma glauben, Christen genannt, welche weitbekannt sind.	4h. trägt ihre Predigt bis jetzt gedeihend Frucht und ruft die ganze Welt zur Erleuchtung.

### 3.1 *Abschnitt 2,4a*

Zunächst ist nochmals zu betonen (s.o. zu 2,2c), dass in Ba und besonders in Ar nur im übertragenen Sinne von einer Genealogie die Rede sein kann. Auch wenn  $\gamma\epsilon\nu\epsilon\alpha\lambda\omicron\gamma\acute{\epsilon}\omega$  bzw.  $\gamma\epsilon\nu\epsilon\alpha\lambda\omicron\gamma\acute{\epsilon}\omicron\mu\alpha\iota$  Hapaxlegomenon in Ba ist, gilt es m.E. nicht als „erwiesen, daß  $\gamma\epsilon\nu\epsilon\alpha\lambda\omicron\gamma\omicron\upsilon\acute{\nu}\tau\alpha\iota$  ursprünglich ist,“ als „Stammvater der

Christen“ wird Christus weder hier noch an den meisten der von Seeberg angeführten Stellen bezeichnet. Recht zu geben ist Seeberg aber, dass τοῦ κυρίου von Aristides hier nicht gebraucht wurde (vgl. auch 15,3c und bes. κύριος ὁ θεός in 15,8a). Entscheidend ist, dass Aristides nach wiederholtem οὖν (vgl. 2,1,2c zu ܐܚܗܐ [hākēl]) gar nicht von der ἀρχή (vgl. 1,2c) des γένος der Christen gesprochen hat, sondern von der ἀρχή τῆς αὐτῶν θρησκείας (wobei es auf die Wortfolge nicht ankommt). Jesus der Christus/Messias (vgl. 15,7b,8a; 16,2b; 17,3c) ist also der Anfänger, Urheber und Begründer der spezifisch christlichen „Gottesverehrung“ und „Religion.“

### 3.2 *Abschnitt 2,4b*

Nicht ὁμολόγηται oder die schlechtere Lesart ὁμολογεῖται (Ba 27,250) ist „sicher,“ sondern die wiederum (vgl. 2,3) nicht eindeutig zu bestimmende Vorlage des Partizips von ܐܫܬܡܡܗ (‘*eštammah*). Denn ὁμολογέω gehört zusammen mit ἐξομολογέω und ὁμολογία (und auch ἐξομολόγησις) zu den Lieblingswörtern von Ba (vgl. schon Röm 10,9–10). Als Quasizitat hat Volk unter Hinweis auf Mk 5,7 und Lk 8,28 υἱὸς τοῦ θεοῦ τοῦ ὑψίστου gekennzeichnet (Ba 27,250). Der Gebrauch des ganz ungewöhnlichen Passiv-Partizips von Pa. ܐܠܠܝ (‘*allī*) statt des zu erwartenden ܡܪܝܩܡܐ (*mrayymā*) lässt vermuten, dass Aristides diesen Christus entweder υἱὸς τοῦ θεοῦ τοῦ ὑψηλοῦ nannte oder sogar υἱὸς ὑψηλὸς τοῦ θεοῦ. „Die Frage, ob ἐν πνεύματι ἀγίῳ zum Folgenden oder zum Vorhergehenden gehört,“ wird von Seeberg folgendermaßen beantwortet: „Ἐν πνεύματι ἀγίῳ ἀπ’ οὐρανοῦ καταβάς hat Arist[ides] von Christus geschrieben“. Aristides hat aber das heilige πνεῦμα bzw. den heiligen Geist überhaupt nicht erwähnt, während in den einschlägigen Texten von Ba 7,135–36 und 19,36–38 (s.u. und vgl. auch Ba 34,104) öfter von διὰ/ἐκ πνεύματος ἀγίου o.ä. die Rede ist, was ebenso wie der Zusatz in Ar letztlich auf Mt 1,18 und Lk 1,35 zurückgeht. Aristides hat gesagt, was sogar Seeberg für „inhaltlich richtig“ hält, dass ὁ θεός (vgl. 1,1a u.ö.) angeblich (vgl. 2,2c zum Ethpe. von ܐܡܪ [‘*emar*]) vom Himmel herabgekommen ist, worüber der athenische Philosoph nach seiner eigenen Umschreibung Gottes in Kap. 1 vielleicht selbst gestaunt haben mag. Ob in Gr\* καταβάς (so Ba) stand oder κατέβη(ν), lässt sich nicht entscheiden. Unsicher ist auch, ob ἀπό (so Ba) oder ἐκ/ἐξ Vorlage von ܡܢ (*men*) war. Mit οὐρανός (in Sy ܫܡܝܝܐ [‘*šmayyā*]) ist hier im Gegensatz zu 1,1a und auch zu 1,2e die in der Antike unproblematische „Wohnung . . . Gottes“ gemeint, in die der Auferstandene zurückkehrt (s.u. 4f).

Der Zusatz διὰ τὴν σωτηρίαν τῶν ἀνθρώπων in Ba 27,251 lässt es ratsam erscheinen, an dieser Stelle (ähnlich wie in 1,2c) einige Passagen aus Ba zusammenzustellen, um klar zu machen, wie sich byzantinische Dogmatik mit der benutzten *Apologie* des Aristides vermischt hat.



- Ba 1,12–14 πᾶσαν μὲν διὰ σαρκὸς ὑπὲρ ἡμῶν τελέσας οἰκονομίαν, σταυρόν τε καὶ | θάνατον καταδεξάμενος καὶ τοῖς ἐπουρανίοις παραδόξως ἐνοποιήσας τὰ | ἐπίγεια, ἀναστὰς δὲ ἐκ νεκρῶν καὶ μετὰ δόξης εἰς οὐρανοὺς ἀναληφθεὶς . . .
- Ba 7,135–36 [Fortsetzung des zu 1,2c wiedergegebenen Textes] καὶ—θεὸς ὢν τέλειος—ἄνθρωπος τέλειος γίνεται ἐκ πνεύματος | ἁγίου καὶ Μαρίας τῆς ἁγίας παρθένου καὶ θεοτόκου.  
Vgl. auch ἐκ παρθένου ἁγίας in Ba 24,101 im Kontext von 24,99–103, wo Gott als ὁ πάσης τῆς κτίσεως ποιητῆς καὶ τοῦ ἡμετέρου γένους δημιουργός bezeichnet wird (99–100) und von der Menschwerdung dieses Gottes (100–01) und vom Kreuzestod die Rede ist (103).
- Ba 7,158–61 Ὅθεν καὶ μαθητὰς ἐξελέξατο δώδεκα, οὓς καὶ ἀποστόλους | ἐκάλεσε . . . | . . . | . . . τῇ αὐτοῦ οἰκονομίᾳ.
- Ba 19,34–39 καὶ ὅτι ὁ | μονογενῆς υἱὸς καὶ λόγος τοῦ θεοῦ καὶ θεὸς διὰ τὴν σωτηρίαν | κατήλθεν ἐπὶ γῆς, εὐδοκίᾳ τοῦ πατρὸς καὶ συνεργίᾳ τοῦ ἁγίου πνεύματος | ἀσπόρως συλληφθεὶς ἐν τῇ μήτρᾳ τῆς ἁγίας παρθένου καὶ θεοτόκου Μαρίας | διὰ πνεύματος ἁγίου, καὶ ἀφθόρως ἐξ αὐτῆς γεννηθεὶς καὶ ἄνθρωπος τέλειος | γενόμενος, [Fortsetzung von 19,39 in 1,2c].
- Ba 19,44–46 πῶς ἑαυτὸν ἐκένωσεν ὁ υἱὸς | τοῦ θεοῦ καὶ ἄνθρωπος γέγονεν ἐκ παρθενικῶν αἱμάτων ἀσπόρως τε καὶ | ἀφθάρτως, . . .
- Ba 19,46–48 Πίστει | γὰρ ταῦτα ἐδιδάχθημεν κατέχειν τὰ θειωδῶς ἡμῖν ἐκ τῆς θείας γραφῆς | εἰρημένᾳ . . .
- Ba 19,52–53 [in christologischem Credo-Kontext, der in Ba 19,48 beginnt] ἔσταυρώθη | καὶ ἐτάφη, θανάτου γευσάμενος, . . .
- Ba 34,103–07 Σπλαγχνισθεὶς οὖν ὁ πλάσας ἡμᾶς θεὸς εὐδοκίᾳ | τοῦ πατρὸς καὶ συνεργίᾳ τοῦ ἁγίου πνεύματος εὐδόκησεν ἐκ παρθένου | ἁγίας καθ' ἡμᾶς τεχθῆναι· καὶ πάθεισιν ὀμιλήσας ὁ ἀπαθὴς διὰ τρίτης τε | ἀναστὰς ἐκ νεκρῶν, ἐλυτρώσατο ἡμᾶς τοῦ προτέρου ἐπιτιμίου καὶ κλέους | ὑπερτέρου ἠξίωσε.

Gegenüber der eklektischen Rekonstruktion von Hennecke kommt Seeberg dem Rest von 4b in Gr\* viel näher: „ἐκ παρθένου Ἑβραϊκῆς (vgl. hierzu das Frg. bei Harris p. 34) ἀνέλαβε σάρκα καὶ ἐνεδύσατο· καὶ κατώκησεν ἐν θυγατρὶ ἀνθρώπου ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ θεοῦ“. Der in der Antike kaum Aufsehen erregende Begriff παρθένος (in Sy ܐܘܪܘܬܐ [būtā]; in Ar ḥnḥu [koys]) stammt aus Mt 1,23 und Lk 1,27. Die Verbindung mit ἁγία in Ba statt mit Ἑβραϊκῆ (in Sy ܐܘܪܘܬܐ [ebrytā]; in Ar ḥrwylygh [ebryec'i]) geht ebenso aufs Konto des Barlaam-Übersetzers



(s.o. Ba 7,135; 19,37; 24,101; 34,104–05) wie die Zusätze διὰ τὴν σωτηρίαν τῶν ἀνθρώπων (s.o. Ba 19,35), ἀσπύρωσ (s.o. Ba 19,37.45) und ἀφθόρωσ (s.o. Ba 19,38). Ausgangspunkt für den Begriff σάρξ (in Sy ܠܫܪܐ [besrā]) ist natürlich Joh 1,14. Die Übersetzung durch den ganzheitlicheren Begriff ܡܪܡܝܢܐ (*marmin*) in Ar ist völlig sachgemäß, weil mit σάρξ ein „Mensch von Fleisch und Blut“ gemeint ist. Es ist durchaus möglich, dass in Gr\* σάρκα nur Objekt von ἀνέλαβε war (wie in Ba, unterstützt vom Aorist Partizip von ܡܢܠܢܘܠ [arnum] in Ar; in Sy ܠܡܪ [šqal]) und dass dieses Bild weiter ausgemalt wurde in Sy durch den Zusatz von ܠܒܝܫܐ (*lbeš*). Wichtiger ist, dass für Menschen des 2. Jh. die Vorstellung der Fleischlichkeit oder Körperlichkeit von Göttern kaum anstoßerregend war, wie ein Satz des Traumdeuters Artemidoros (2,35) über Artemis zeigt:

οὐδὲν <δὲ> διαφέρει τὴν θεὸν ἰδεῖν ὅποιαν ὑπειλήφαμεν ἢ ἀγαλμα αὐτῆς· ἐάν τε γὰρ σάρκῖνοι οἱ θεοὶ φαίνονται ἐάν τε ὡς ἀγάλματα ἐξ ὕλης πεποιημένα, τὸν αὐτὸν ἔχουσι λόγον.

It makes no difference whether we see the goddess herself as we have imagined her to be or a statue of her. For whether gods appear in the flesh or as statues fashioned out of some material, they have the same meaning. [ET R.J. White]

Der Ausdruck „in eines Menschen Tochter“ in Sy ist trotz Gen 6,2 nicht originell, sondern idiomatisch. Analog zu ἡ θεός (s.o. im Zitat) bezeichnet nämlich auch ἡ ἀνθρωπος einen weiblichen Menschen (vgl. nur Herodot 1,60 am Ende). Darum ist anzunehmen, dass in Gr\* ἐν ἀνθρώπῳ stand und dieser Ausdruck von Sy treffend durch ܠܒܢܐ ܕܢܥܡܐ (*b-bāt nāsā*) wiedergegeben wurde. Ob die Vorlage von ܠܡܪܐ (*mar*) κατώκησεν war (Seeberg, s.o.) oder ἐνώκησεν oder auch einfach nur ῥώκησεν, sei dahingestellt. Mit dem Begriff „Sohn Gottes“ (in Gr\* sicherlich ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ θεοῦ) kommt Aristides auf den Anfang von 4b zurück.

### 3.3 *Abschnitt 2,4c*

Wiederum ist der eklektischen Wiederherstellung von Gr\* durch Hennecke Seebergs begründetere Rekonstruktion als Arbeitshypothese vorzuziehen: „Ταῦτα ἀπὸ (oder ἐκ) τοῦ παρ’ αὐτοῖς καλουμένου (oder: λεγομένου) εὐαγγελίου, ὀλίγον ἔμπροσθεν κηρυχθέντος, διδάσκεται.“ In bezug auf die „wesentliche Echtheit“ von Ba ist Seeberg entgangen, dass sich Spuren von 4c auch in Ba 19,46–48 erhalten haben (s.o.), wodurch sich der kritisierte „Pleonasmus“ in Sy eher erklären lässt.

„Τὸ εὐαγγέλιον nennt Arist[ides] die ev[angelische] Botschaft, die nunmehr in Schriften fixiert ist“ (Seeberg). Es ist also das mündliche wie schriftliche „κήρυγμα“ gemeint (s.u. 4h). Der Ausdruck „vor kurzer Zeit“ in Sy ist

nicht Übersetzung von ὀλίγον, sondern von πρὸ μικροῦ/ὀλίγου χρόνου. Da in Ba 27,256 παρ' αὐτοῖς bezeugt ist, darf man annehmen, dass  $\text{ܣܥܝܗܘܢ}$  (*šēdayhōn*) Übersetzung dieses präpositionalen Ausdrucks ist, obwohl auch πρὸς αὐτούς als Vorlage in Frage käme.

Das Partizip  $\text{ܡܝܬܘܠܦܐ}$  (*metyallpā*) betrachtet Seeberg als Übersetzung von διδάσκειται (s.o.). Dieses reflexive Partizip mit Passivbedeutung entspricht aber eher dem Perfekt δεδίδαγται, könnte aber sogar die stärkere Bedeutung von δογματίζομαι haben. Beim vorhergehenden Passiv-Partizip von  $\text{ܝܡܪ}$  (*'emar*) hilft καλουμένης in Ba 27,257 gar nicht weiter. Abgesehen von der Frage, ob in Gr\* der Genitiv eines Partizips stand, wie Seeberg vermutet, oder der Nominativ in einem Relativsätzchen, kommt καλούμενον hier nicht in Betracht, sondern entweder εἰρημένον oder ῥηθέν (bzw. eine andere passive Form von εἶπον wie z.B. εἴρηται) oder sogar das an Orakelsprache erinnernde κερηματισμένον (bzw. κερηματίσται). Das zwischengeschaltete Ethpe. von  $\text{ܝܥ}$  (*kraz*) bringt als Übersetzung von κηρύσσομαι (s.o. κηρυχθέντος bei Seeberg) eine neue Nuance ins Spiel, nämlich die der *öffentlichen* „Predigt“ und „Propaganda.“

Durch den Zusatz βασιλεῦ musste in Ba die Wendung „wenn ihr lest“ (Sy) in das singularische ἐὰν ἐντύχης geändert werden. Ob aber in Gr\* ἐντυγχάνω oder ἀναγινώσκω (oder sogar beide Verben) gebraucht wurden, lässt sich nicht entscheiden. Ebenso wenig lässt sich mit Sicherheit sagen, ob  $\text{ܗܝܠܐ}$  (*haylā*) Übersetzung von δύναμις oder ἰσχύς ist. Ziemlich sicher ist dagegen, dass das Aph. von  $\text{ܕܪܝܩ}$  (*dreḳ/drak*) aufs Medium καταλαμβάνομαι zurückgeht, γνῶναι in Ba 27,257 also sekundär ist. Im Gegensatz zur Unbegreiflichkeit Gottes (vgl. 1,1c.2c) ist die auf ( $\text{ܕܠ}$  [*al*] = ἐπί) dem Evangelium ruhende Kraft (vgl. Röm 1,16) durchaus verstehbar, auch wenn das in menschlichen Worten ausgedrückte und verkündigte Evangelium nicht κατὰ ἄνθρωπον ist (vgl. Gal 1,11).

Als Alternative zu Henneckes und Seebergs Rekonstruktionen von Gr\* lassen sich folgende Bruchstücke von 4c zur Diskussion stellen, wobei eine endgültige Entscheidung über Wortfolge und Syntax ohne neue Textfunde unmöglich ist:

Ταῦτα δεδίδαγται (δεδογματίσται) ὑπὸ τοῦ εὐαγγελίου τοῦ πρὸ μικροῦ (ὀλίγου) χρόνου παρ' αὐτοῖς εἰρημένου (κερηματισμένου) καὶ κηρυχθέντος, δι' οὗ καὶ ὑμεῖς ἐὰν ἐντύχητε (ἀναγνώτε) καταλήψεσθε τὴν (τὸν) ἐπ' αὐτὸ δύναμιν (ἰχθύν/ύν).

### 3.4 *Abschnitt 2,4d*

Mit wiederholtem οὖν (s.o. 4a) stellt Aristides nun direkt fest (s.o. 4b), dass Jesus Hebräer (= Jude) war. Während 4d in Ba ganz ausgelassen wurde, wiederholt Ar die Begriffe „Körper/Fleisch“ und „Jungfrau“ (s.o. 4b). Nicht nur der θεοτόκος entsprechende Begriff *uunniwδωδῆ* (*astuacacin*), sondern auch der

Name „Maria(m)“ ist „späterer Zusatz“, entweder „des Uebersetzers oder eines Abschreibers“ (Sasse). Da in Sy nicht mehr ܡܘܠܐ (*gensā*) gebraucht wird (wie 2,2a u.ö.), sondern ܫܪܒܬܐ (*šarbtā*), ist trotz der Wiederholung von ܘܩܩ (*azg*) in Ar anzunehmen, dass Aristides einen von γένος abweichenden Begriff wie γενεά oder φυλή verwenden wollte. Wie in 2,3 ist ܐܬܝܠܐ (*etiled*) Übersetzung von ἐγεννήθη. Obwohl Jesus durch seine Geburt zum γένος der Juden gehört (2,3), wird er als Christus/Messias zum Gründer einer neuen Religionsgruppe (s.o. 4a), und zwar zunächst durch einen kleineren Kreis von Anhängern.

### 3.5 *Abschnitt 2,4e*

Mit den zwölf μαθηταί (Ba 27,258; in Sy Plural von ܬܠܡܝܕܐ [*talmīdā*]; in Ar Plural von ܘܩܩܠܬܐ [*ašakert*]) sind natürlich die „Apostel“ im engeren Sinne gemeint, die auch einfach als οἱ δώδεκα bezeichnet wurden (1 Kor 15,5 u.ö.; vgl. Joh 6,70). Leider werden ihre Namen nicht genannt. In Ba 7,158–61 (s.o. und vgl. auch Ba 8,82–83) findet sich eine Stelle, die nicht nur von Lk 6,13 und Apg 1,2 beeinflusst ist, sondern vielleicht auch von Aristides (οἰκονομία). Die Änderung von ἔσχε (in Sy ܘܠܐܘܠܐ [*hwaw leh*]) in den Aorist von ܦܘܢܩܬܐ (*əntrem*) in Ar geht sicher auch auf ἐξελέξατο in Apg 1,2 zurück. Den unübersetzt gelassenen t.t. οἰκονομία (in Sy ܡܕܒܪܐܢܘܬܐ [*mdabbrānūtā*]) hat Ba umgestellt, mit dem Lieblingswort θαυμαστός (-ή, -όν) verbunden und enger an Jesu Tod gerückt (Ba 27,254 [vgl. 15,1c]; s.o. schon Ba 1,12). Wie der passivische Konjunktiv lautete, der dem Eshthaph. von ܡܠܐ (*mlā*) zugrundelag, wissen wir nicht. Vielleicht war es eine Aoristform von τελέω, also τελεσθή (vgl. τελέσας in Ba 27,254 und s.o. Ba 1,12); vielleicht benutzte Aristides aber auch τελειώω oder ein Kompositum wie ἐπιτελέω bzw. συντελέω.

### 3.6 *Abschnitt 2,4f*

Im umgestellten Text von Ba (15,1c) ist deshalb von den Juden nicht die Rede, weil sie im Zusatz zum Juden-Kapitel (14,1a–4b, bes. 14,2c), ja schon vorher im Zusammenhang mit der Kreuzigung ausdrücklich genannt wurden (vgl. Ba 7,161–74). Man kann aber mit Sicherheit davon ausgehen, dass der präpositionale Ausdruck ὑπὸ (τῶν) Ἰουδαίων von Aristides gebraucht wurde. Die Tatsache, dass weder hier noch sonstwo in der *Apologie* von den Römern die Rede ist, erklärt sich am einfachsten vom Adressaten her, d.h. dem römischen Kaiser, dem gegenüber man nicht in einer um Anerkennung bittenden Schrift römische Beamte und Soldaten ins negative Licht setzen konnte. Die Worte διὰ σταυροῦ θανάτου ἐγένεσατο ἐκουσίᾳ βουλῇ κατ' οἰκονομίαν μεγάλην (Ba 27,254–55) gehen aufs Konto von Ba (s.o. Ba 1,12–13; 19,53; 24,103; vgl. Ba 7,167 und 21,35). Denn Sy macht nach Seeberg „unzweifelhaft, daß das

Original von einem σταυρούσθαι überhaupt nicht geredet hat, sondern nur ein Durchbo[h]rtwerden erwä[h]nte“. Das Ethpe. von **ܕܩܪ** (*dqar*) ist Übersetzung von ἐξεκεντήθη und bezieht sich hier zwar auf die Todesursache, stammt aber aus dem Zitat von Sach 12,10 in Joh 19,37 (vgl. auch Apk 1,7). Die vielleicht nur mythologische Testtat des römischen Soldaten in Joh 19,34 wird also auf eine nicht näher beschriebene Tötungstat von Juden übertragen. Wer die johanneische Passionsgeschichte nicht kannte, musste beim Verb ἐκκεντέω zunächst einmal an „durchbohren“ im Sinne von „töten“ denken, etwa mit einem Dolch oder Schwert. Man kann also mit Seeberg sagen, dass „Juden für die Mörder Christi angesehen“ wurden (vgl. 1 Thess 2,15; Apg 2,23.36; 3,15; 4,10; 5,30; 7,52).

Es ist nun zunächst einmal notwendig, auf die von Paulus zitierte Formel in 1 Kor 15,3–4 hinzuweisen, die letztlich hinter dem Wortlaut von Sy steht: ὅτι Χριστὸς ἀπέθανεν . . . καὶ ὅτι ἐτάφη καὶ ὅτι ἐγήγερται τῇ ἡμέρᾳ τῇ τρίτῃ κτλ. Falls die Worte „und starb und wurde begraben“ wirklich erst in „späterer Zeit“ hinzugefügt wurden, und zwar „nach der christlichen Ausdrucksweise“ (Seeberg), so müsste man eigentlich auch erwarten, dass ein Christ ἐσταυρώθη in Gr<sup>Sy</sup> (s.o. Ba 19,52) bzw. **ܕܘܩܪ** (*ezdqep*) in Sy an die Stelle des auf Juden bezogenen und daher aller Tradition widersprechenden „wurde durchbohrt“ gesetzt hätte. Die Begründung von Seeberg („für den Kaiser war das bloße Faktum genug“) ist ja auch ziemlich vage, wenn er damit nur die Tatsache des Durchbohrtwerdens meint. Man kann also mit gutem Grund davon ausgehen, dass die Vorlage von **ܕܘܩܪ** (*u-mit w-etaqbar*) schon in Gr\*—und nicht erst in Gr<sup>Sy</sup>—καὶ ἀπέθανεν καὶ ἐτάφη war.

Ob das folgende **ܘܐܡܪܝܢ** (*w-āmrīn* = „und sie sagen“) trotz des Fehlens von λέγουσιν in Ba „sicherlich echt“ ist, darf als weniger wichtig angesehen werden als die Frage, ob ἀνεβίω (so Ba 27,255) oder ἐγήγερται (in Sy **ܩܡ** [*qām*]; in Ar medio-passives Part. von *yaruc'anem*) „ursprünglich“ ist. Entscheidet man sich für das nur hier in Ba vorkommende Verb ἀναβιώω (vgl. II Clem 19,4), dann könnte man die Folgerung ziehen, dass Abschreiber und/oder Übersetzer der *Apologie* mit ihrer Korrektur die paulinische Formel oder gar die „Glaubensregel“ im Kopf hatten. Aber nur wenn man den Einfluss von 1 Kor 15,3–4 herunterspielt, kann man zur Annahme kommen, dass ἀνέστη (nicht ἀναστάς wie bei Seeberg) die ausdrückliche (in Gr<sup>Sy</sup> und Gr<sup>Ar</sup>) oder bloß intendierte Entsprechung von **ܩܡ** (*qām*) ist. Die Frage ist also: Hat Aristides ἀνεβίω, ἀνέστη oder ἐγήγερται gebraucht? Die Antwort ist: Wir wissen es nicht. Dass in Gr\* μετὰ τρεῖς ἡμέρας statt τῇ ἡμέρᾳ τῇ τρίτῃ (1 Kor 15,4) stand, ist nicht besonders wichtig, weil beide Ausdrücke „am 3. Tage“ bedeuten. Vorlage von **ܐܬܝܠܝ** (*et'alli*) war ἀνελήφθη (s.o. ἀναληφθεὶς in Ba 1,14; vgl. Mk 16,19 und Apg 1,11). Sowohl hier in Ba (ἀνήλθεν) als auch in Ar (Aorist von *ϕεραινωμι*

[*veranam*]) erscheint die Himmelfahrt Jesu schon als aktive Tat (wie öfter bei Justin und Tatian).

### 3.7 *Abschnitt 2,4g*

Während der Text von 4g bei seiner Umstellung in Ba teils gekürzt, teils aber auch erweitert wurde (s.o. Einleitung zu 2,4a–h), erlitt er in Ar starke Veränderungen, die sich bis in 4h hinein erstrecken.

Am Anfang von 4g stand, mit oder ohne *καί*, wahrscheinlich nicht *εἶτα*, sondern in unklassischer Weise *τότε*. Subjekt von 4g sind die aus 4e bekannten zwölf Jünger (= Apostel), deren Tun durch *ἐξῆλθον* (so Ba; in Sy Pe. ܩܦܩ [n̄paq]) und *ἐδίδαξαν* (so Ba; in Sy Part. von Pa. ܐܠܦ [allep]) beschrieben wird. Vom Taufen ist nicht die Rede, worauf später noch einmal (vgl. 15,9b) zurückzukommen ist. Wenn Seeberg behauptet, *ἐπαρχίαι τῆς οἰκουμένης* (Ba 27,259) sei „gut übersetzt“ durch ܡܢܐܘܘܬܐ ܕܝܕܝܘܬܐ (*mnāwātā ʾidiātā d-ʾālmā*), und Geffcken sogar noch stärker die Priorität von Ba herausstreicht, dann könnte man auch umgekehrt argumentieren, zumal *οἰκουμένη* zu den Lieblingswörtern von Ba gehört. Der Text von Gr\* wäre also folgendermaßen zu rekonstruieren: . . . εἰς τὰ μέρη γνωστὰ τοῦ κόσμου. Mit *τῆς οἰκουμένης* wird dieser Text in Ba richtig interpretiert, erhält aber durch den Gebrauch von *εἰς τὰς ἐπαρχίας* eine über das rein Geographische hinausgehende Note. Der Ausdruck ܪܒܘܬܐ ܕܗܘܐ (*rabbūteh d-haw*) in Sy ist Übersetzung des in Ba erhaltenen Objekts *τὴν ἐκείνου μεγαλοσύνην* in Gr\*.

Ob die zwei in Sy erscheinenden Begriffe am Ende von 4g eine Entsprechung in Gr\* hatten, ist ebenso schwer zu bestimmen wie ihre etwaigen Vorlagen. Denn ܡܩܩܘܬܐ (*makkikūtā*) wird zur Übersetzung von *ἐπιείκεια*, *εὐλάβεια*, *πραῦτης* und *ταπεινοφροσύνη* gebraucht. Und ܡܩܩܘܬܐ (*knikūtā*) könnte Übersetzung des Tugendbegriffs *σωφροσύνη* sein; aber auch *σεμνότης* käme als Vorlage in Frage, ja sogar der militärische t.t. *εὐταξία*.

### 3.8 *Abschnitt 2,4h*

Im Großen und Ganzen ist Seebergs auf Sy basierende Rekonstruktion von Gr\* richtig: „ὅθεν . . . καὶ οἱ εἰσέτι πιστεύοντες τῷ κηρύγματι τούτῳ καλοῦνται χριστιανοί, οἱ περιβόητοί εἰσιν.“ Zum Vergleich sei der Text von Ba 27,261–62 danebengestellt: “Ὅθεν οἱ εἰσέτι διακονοῦντες τῇ δικαιοσύνῃ τοῦ κηρύγματος αὐτῶν καλοῦνται Χριστιανοί.

Grundlage von ܢܘܡܢܐ (*yawmān*) könnte statt *εἰσέτι* auch *σήμερον* gewesen sein. Mit der Einfügung von *τῇ δικαιοσύνῃ* in Ba taten sich schon die Abschreiber schwer, wie die Lesart *διακονίᾳ* zeigt (Ba 27,261). Warum der Barlaam-Übersetzer *διακονέω* statt *πιστεύω* gebrauchte, bleibt unerklärlich. Vielleicht

hat er an irgendein Amt in der Kirche gedacht. Auf jeden Fall ist πιστεύω (in Sy Aktiv-Part. von Paiel ܥܘܡܘܬܐ [haymen]) vorzuziehen (vgl. Is 53,1 LXX in Joh 12,38 und Röm 10,16). Der Begriff ܟܪܘܨܘܬܐ (kārōzūtā) ist Übersetzung von κήρυγμα, knüpft an das Ethpe. von ܟܪܐܘܝܐ (kraz) an (s.o. 4c in Sy [und Ar]; vgl. Röm 16,25) und umfasst den Inhalt von 4b und 4d–f.

Die Erklärung des „Christennamens“ stößt sich ein wenig mit derjenigen in 4a, vor allem aber mit den von Botermann behandelten Textstellen. Statt καλοῦνται (so Ba) könnte in Gr\* nicht nur ἐπικαλοῦνται oder λέγονται gestanden haben, sondern sogar χρηματίζουσι (vgl. Apg 11,26; zu ܡܘܩܪܥܐ [metqrēn] in Sy vgl. 2,3). Dass die Christen zur Zeit des Aristides schon διαβόητοι bzw. περιβόητοι waren (in Sy ܠܒܝܒܐ [lībē]), ist vielleicht ebenso übertrieben wie die Aussage über „die überall bekannte Bruderliebe“ in 1 Clem 47,5. Ein paar Jahrzehnte zuvor waren die Christen bei den Römern lediglich „als staatsfeindliche Vereinigung abgestempelt“ (Botermann).

#### 4 Schluss von Kapitel 2

##### 4.1 Abschnitt 2,4i (Wiederholung von 2,2a–b)

---

Sy	Ar
Es gibt also vier Geschlechter von Menschen, wie ich zuvor gesagt habe: Barbaren und Griechen, Juden und Christen.	Dieses sind die vier Geschlechter, welche wir dir vor [Augen] gestellt haben, o König: Barbaren, Griechen, Juden und Christen.

---

Dieser abschließende Satz kann auf Grund der Umstellung von 2,3–4h (s.o.) gar nicht in Ba erscheinen. Die Wiederherstellung von Gr\* ist im Anschluss an Hennecke einfach: Εἰσὶν οὖν τέτταρα γένη ἀνθρώπων, ὡς προεῖρηκα· βαρβαροὶ τε καὶ Ἕλληνες, Ἰουδαῖοι καὶ Χριστιανοί.

#### 4.2 *Abschnitt 2,4k (Randglosse in Gr<sup>Ar</sup> und Gr<sup>Sy</sup>)*

Sy	Ar
Nun dient die Luft Gott und das Feuer den Engeln, aber den Dämonen das Wasser und den Menschen die Erde.	Dem Göttlichen gebührte das Geistige, und den Engeln das Feurige, und den Dämonen das Wässrige, und dem Geschlecht der Menschen die Erde hier.

Dieses „Bruchstück“ ist wahrscheinlich eine „Glosse“ zu 3,2 und gehört nicht zur *Apologie* des Aristides. Hennecke wagt nicht nur eine Rekonstruktion von Gr\* (Θεῷ οὖν προσήκει τὸ πνεῦμα, ἀγγέλοις δὲ τὸ πῦρ, δαίμοσι δὲ τὸ ὕδωρ, ἀνθρώποις δὲ ἡ γῆ), sondern versucht diesen Worten auch mit einer platonischen Erklärung von Ulrich von Wilamowitz-Moellendorff („Christianorum caelum est, Iudaeorum ignis, barbarorum mare, Graecorum imperium terrae“) einen Sinn abzugewinnen.

### Bibliographie

- Botermann, Helga. *Das Judenedikt des Kaisers Claudius: Römischer Staat und Christiani im 1. Jahrhundert*, Stuttgart: Steiner, 1996.
- Eusebius. *Kirchengeschichte* (Eduard Schwartz, Theodor Mommsen, and Friedhelm Winkelmann, eds, *Eusebius Caesariensis. Werke*, vol. 2/1–3: *Die Kirchengeschichte*, GCS, n.F. 6/1–3. Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1999).
- Geffcken, Johannes. *Zwei griechische Apologeten*, Leipzig/Berlin: Teubner, 1907.
- Harris, J. Rendel, and J. Armitage Robinson. *The Apology of Aristides on Behalf of the Christians: With an Appendix, Containing the Main Portion of the Original Greek Text*, Texts and Studies 1/1. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1891. 2nd ed., 1893.
- Hennecke, Edgar. *Die Apologie des Aristides. Recension und Rekonstruktion des Textes*, TU, Bd 4/3. Leipzig: J.C. Hinrichs, 1893.
- von Himpel, Felix. “Das Fragment der Apologie des Aristides (...) aus dem Armenischen übersetzt und erläutert.” *Theologische Quartalschrift* 62 (1880): 109–16.
- Lattke, Michael. “War der Apologet Aristides ein Mann von Bildung? Forschungsgeschichtliches Protokoll eines (nicht nur) deutschen Gelehrtenstreits in den ersten 40 Jahren der Aristides-Forschung.” In *Frühchristentum und Kultur*, edited by F.R. Prostmeier, Kommentar zu frühchristlichen Apologeten, Ergänzungsband 2, 35–74. Freiburg: Herder, 2007.
- . “Greek Words in the Syriac Text of the Apology of Aristides.” In *Malphono w-Rabo d-Malphone: Studies in Honor of Sebastian P. Brock*, edited by George A.



- Kiraz, Gorgias Eastern Christian Studies 3, 383–403. Piscataway, N.J.: Gorgias Press, 2008.
- Milne, H.J.M. "A New Fragment of the Apology of Aristides." *JTS* 25 (1923): 73–77.
- Nestle, Eberhard. "Ein paar Kleinigkeiten zum syrischen Aristides." *Zeitschrift für wissenschaftliche Theologie* 36/1 (1893): 368–70.
- Oesterle, Hans-Joachim. "Textkritische Bemerkungen zur ‚Apologie‘ des Aristides von Athen." *Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft* 130/1 (1980): 15–23.
- Pouderon, Bernard, Bernard Outtier, and Marie-Joseph Pierre. "À propos de l'Apologie d'Aristide: recherches sur le prototype commun aux versions syriaque et arménienne." *Revue des sciences religieuses* 74 (2000): 173–93.
- Pouderon, Bernard, and Marie-Joseph Pierre, eds and trans., *Aristide. Apologie*, SC 470. Paris: Éditions du Cerf, 2003.
- Raabe, Richard. *Die Apologie des Aristides. Aus dem Syrischen übersetzt und mit Beiträgen zur Textvergleichung und Anmerkungen herausgegeben*, TU, Bd 9/1. Leipzig: J.C. Hinrichs, 1892.
- Sasse, Franz. "Ein in armenischer Übersetzung aufgefundenes Fragment der Apologie des Aristides." *Zeitschrift für katholische Theologie* 3 (1879): 612–18.
- Seeberg, Reinhold. *Die Apologie des Aristides untersucht und wiederhergestellt*, Forschungen zur Geschichte des neutestamentlichen Kanons und der altkirchlichen Literatur, Bd 5/2. Erlangen und Leipzig: A. Deichert'sche Verlagsbuchhandlung Nachf. (Georg Böhme), 1894.
- Volk, Robert, ed. *Die Schriften des Johannes von Damaskos* VI/2, PTS, Bd 60. Berlin/New York: Walter de Gruyter, 2006.
- Vona, Costantino. *L'Apologia di Aristide. Introduzione, versione dal siriano e commento*, Lateranum n.s. 16. Roma: Facultas Theologica Pontificii Athenaei Lateranensis, 1950.
- White, Robert J. *The Interpretation of Dreams: Oneirocritica by Artemidorus*, Torrance, CA: Original Books, 21990.

### Technische Erläuterungen

Stellenhinweise ohne 'apol.' nach Lattke, "Greek Words," 400–03: 'Synopsis of Subdivisions' (im Vergleich mit der Unterteilung von Goodspeed und Geffcken). Die Abkürzungen 'Ar' und 'Sy' beziehen sich auf die armenischen bzw. syrischen Übersetzungen, die Abkürzung 'Ba' auf den griechischen Text des Barlaam-Romans, der als Band 34 der Loeb Classical Library zugänglich ist (*Barlaam and Ioasaph*), aber nach der neuesten kritischen Ausgabe zitiert wird: Volk, *Schriften*, 5–405. Die Abkürzung 'Gr' bezieht sich auf die Papyrus-Tradition mit den griechischen Papyri Π<sup>1</sup> und Π<sup>2</sup>. Alle erhaltenen Texte finden sich mit französischer Übersetzung in Pouderon et al., *Aristide*, 182–251 (Sy), 256–303 (Ba, Π<sup>1</sup> und Π<sup>2</sup>), 306–13 (Ar). Die Abkürzung 'Gr\*' bezieht sich auf den verlorenen Originaltext, die Abkürzung 'Gr<sup>Ba</sup>' auf die griechischen Vorlagen von Kapitel 27 des Barlaam-Romans ('Ba'). Ähnlich werden 'Gr<sup>Ar</sup>' und 'Gr<sup>Sy</sup>' für griechische Vorlagen von Ar und Sy benutzt.



## What did Ancient Christians Say when they Cast out Demons? Inferences from Spells and Amulets

*Theodore de Bruyn*

The representation of exorcism in early Christian literature is an intriguing portal into the symbolic and social world of early Christians.<sup>1</sup> What exorcism entailed and what it meant varies according to the sources one is reading. In the synoptic gospels demonic possession manifests itself in physiological

---

\* Abbreviations of corpora of 'magical' procedures and spells: *PGM* = Karl Preisendanz and Albert Henrichs, eds, *Papyri Graecae Magicae: Die griechischen Zauberpapyri*, 2 vols, 2nd ed. (Stuttgart: Teubner, 1974–1975); *SM* = Robert W. Daniel and Franco Maltomini, eds, *Supplementum Magicum*, 2 vols, Papyrologica Coloniensia, vol. 16 (Opladen: Westdeutscher Verlag, 1991–1992); *GMPT* = Hans Dieter Betz, ed., *The Greek Magical Papyri in Translation, Including the Demotic Spells*, vol. 1, 2nd ed. (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1992); *ACM* = Marvin Meyer and Richard Smith, eds, *Ancient Christian Magic: Coptic Texts of Ritual Power* (San Francisco: HarperCollins, 1994). Papyrological series are abbreviated according to John F. Oates, Roger S. Bagnall, Sarah J. Clackson, Alexandra A. O'Brien, Joshua D. Sosin, Terry G. Wilfong, and Klaas A. Worp, eds, *Checklist of Greek, Latin, Demotic and Coptic Papyri, Ostraca and Tablets*, <http://scriptorium.lib.duke.edu/papyrus/texts/clist.html>, May 2014, to which the reader is referred for bibliographical details. *PGM* created a convention of referring to Graeco-Egyptian items by Roman numerals (I–V in vol. 1; VI–LXXXI in vol. 2, 1–208; *GMPT* continues this convention, adding to the texts published in *PGM*), and 'Christian' items by Arabic numerals (vol. 2, 209–32), prefacing papyri and parchments with the letter 'P'. References to items in *SM* and papyrological editions are by volume number in Roman numerals and item number in Arabic numerals.

1 The principal recent studies are Andrea Nicolotti, *Esorcismo cristiano e possessione diabolica tra II e III secolo*, *Instrumenta Patristica et Mediaevalia*, vol. 54 (Turnhout: Brepols, 2011); Graham H. Twelftree, *In the Name of Jesus: Exorcism among Early Christians* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2007); Eric Sorensen, *Possession and Exorcism in the New Testament and Early Christianity*, *WUNT* 2, vol. 157 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2002); and Elizabeth Ann Leeper, "Exorcism in Early Christianity" (PhD diss., Duke University, 1991). Important earlier studies are Otto Böcher, *Dämonenfurcht und Dämonenabwehr: Ein Beitrag zur Vorgeschichte der christlichen Taufe*, *Beiträge zur Wissenschaft vom Alten und Neuen Testament*, Fünfte Folge, Bd 10 (Stuttgart: W. Kohlhammer, 1970); Klaus Thraede, "Exorcismus," *Reallexikon für Antike und Christentum* 7 (1969): 44–117; and Franz Joseph Dölger, *Der Exorcismus im altchristlichen Taufritual: Eine religionsgeschichtliche Studie*, *Studien zur Geschichte und Kultur des Altertums*, Bd 3/1–2 (Paderborn: Ferdinand Schöningh, 1909).

ailments and self-destructive behaviour. The expulsion of demons restores the possessed to physical health and permits their reintegration into society. It is also a visual sign that the coming Kingdom of God is overcoming the power of Satan.<sup>2</sup> Although Paul in his writings refers to signs and wonders performed by him and others as ancillary to the message of the gospel, he shows little interest in acts of exorcism. He is much more concerned with the ethical struggle between sinful and righteous motivations and with the Spirit of God's ability to overcome the influence of the principalities of this age in that struggle.<sup>3</sup> In the canonical and apocryphal acts, exorcisms performed by the apostles—occasionally quite spectacularly in the apocryphal acts<sup>4</sup>—demonstrate the apostles' superiority over Jewish and polytheistic counterparts and confirm the authority of their message about Jesus.<sup>5</sup> In the second century, Christian apologists and polemicists contrasted the simplicity and efficacy of their forms of exorcism with the elaborate and incomprehensible incantations employed by polytheists and 'false' Christians.<sup>6</sup> Initially the gift of exorcism, bestowed by God, could come to any Christian, woman or man, but over the course of the third, fourth, and fifth centuries the practice was regulated within the structure of lay and clerical offices under the authority of the bishop.<sup>7</sup>

From Christian literature of the second and third centuries we have a general understanding of what Christians said and did when they were casting out demons. Typically, exorcism was pronounced in the name of Jesus or God, accompanied by laying-on of hands and the sign of the cross.<sup>8</sup> The exorcist might expand on the name of Jesus. Justin, for instance, speaks several times of demons being cast out "by the name of Jesus Christ, crucified under Pontius Pilate."<sup>9</sup> On one occasion his description of Jesus' life is more detailed, drawing

---

2 Sorensen, *Possession*, 118–31.

3 *Ibid.*, 153–66.

4 E.g., *Act. Ioh.* 37–45; *Act Pet.* 11; and *Act. Thom.* 68–81 (François Bovon and Pierre Geoltrain, eds, *Écrits apocryphes chrétiens 1*, Bibliothèque de la Pléiade [Paris: Gallimard, 1997], 1009–12, 1073–74, and 1390–1400). But cf. Jan N. Bremmer, "Magic in the *Apocryphal Acts of the Apostles*," in *The Metamorphosis of Magic from Late Antiquity to the Early Modern Period*, ed. Jan N. Bremmer and Jan R. Veenstra, Groningen Studies in Cultural Change, vol. 1 (Leuven: Peeters, 2002), 60.

5 Sorensen, *Possession*, 148–53; and Nicolotti, *Esorcismo*, 269–361.

6 Nicolotti, *Esorcismo*, 146–55 and 229–34.

7 Leeper, "Exorcism," 295–331.

8 Nicolotti, *Esorcismo*, 69–70 and 76; and Sorensen, *Possession*, 184–85.

9 Justin, *Dial.* 30.3 (Philippe Bobichon, ed., *Justin Martyr, Dialogue avec Tryphon*, 2 vols, Paradosis, vol. 47 [Fribourg: Academic Press and Éditions Saint-Paul, 2003], 1.256); and *idem*, 2 *Apol.* 6.6 (SC 507.334).

on what appears to have been an early summary of faith regarding Jesus.<sup>10</sup> This sort of summary may be what Origen refers to when he states that Christians drive out demons “by the name of Jesus, together with a recital of narratives about him.”<sup>11</sup> In the same passage Origen notes that they also add “other reliable words, in accordance with the divine scripture,”<sup>12</sup> possibly referring to stories of healings and exorcisms from the gospels.<sup>13</sup> Tertullian offers a few more details, explaining that the demons flee at the name of Jesus and the reminder of the punishments they will receive from him—which Tertullian refers to as adjurations<sup>14</sup>—accompanied by laying-on of hands and blowing of air.<sup>15</sup>

These descriptions of exorcisms come from writers intent on contrasting Christian practice with Jewish or polytheistic practice. Given the tendency of Christian apologists to emphasise discontinuity over continuity with ambient customs, one would like to have independent corroboration of their claims. Sources that purport to describe the rites and offices of the early church—the so-called ‘church orders’—are of little help in this regard. They date from the fourth century or later, and have complex manuscript traditions incorporating later practices.<sup>16</sup> Moreover, they tell us more about exorcism as part of the rite of initiation than about occasional, ad-hoc exorcism. The witness of the so-called *Traditio apostolica*, often discussed in studies of the transition to institutionalised forms of exorcism,<sup>17</sup> is a case in point.<sup>18</sup> However, we do have

- 
- 10 Justin, *Dial.* 85.2 (Bobichon, *Justin Martyr*, 1.416): κατὰ γὰρ τοῦ ὀνόματος αὐτοῦ τούτου τοῦ υἱοῦ τοῦ θεοῦ καὶ πρωτοτόκου πάσης κτίσεως, καὶ διὰ παρθένου γεννηθέντος καὶ παθητοῦ γενομένου ἀνθρώπου, καὶ σταυρωθέντος ἐπὶ Ποντίου Πιλάτου ὑπὸ τοῦ λαοῦ ὑμῶν καὶ ἀποθανόντος, καὶ ἀναστάντος ἐκ νεκρῶν καὶ ἀναβάντος εἰς τὸν οὐρανόν, πᾶν δαιμόνιον ἐξορκιζόμενον νικάται καὶ ὑποτάσσεται. On *regulae fidei* in the second century see P. Smulders, “Some Riddles in the Apostles’ Creed: II. Creeds and Rules of Faith,” *Bijdragen* 32 (1971): 350–66.
- 11 Origen, *Con. Cels.* 1.6 (SC 132.90): Οὐ γὰρ κατακλήσειν ἰσχύειν δοκοῦσιν ἄλλὰ τῷ ὀνόματι Ἰησοῦ, μετὰ τῆς ἀπαγγελίας τῶν περὶ αὐτὸν ἱστοριῶν. See also 3.24 (SC 136.56).
- 12 *Ibid.*, 1.6 (SC 132.92): σαφές ὅτι Ἰχριστιανοὶ οὐδεμιᾶ μελέτῃ ἐπωδῶν χρώμενοι τυγχάνουσιν ἀλλὰ τῷ ὀνόματι τοῦ Ἰησοῦ μετ’ ἄλλων λόγων πεπιστευμένων κατὰ τὴν θείαν γραφήν.
- 13 Nicolotti, *Esorcismo*, 72.
- 14 Tertullian, *Apol.* 32.2–3 (CCL 1.143).
- 15 *Ibid.*, 23.15–16 (CCL 1.132–33). See Nicolotti, *Esorcismo*, 492–509.
- 16 For an overview see Paul F. Bradshaw, *The Search for the Origins of Christian Worship: Sources and Methods for the Study of Early Liturgy*, 2nd ed. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), 73–97.
- 17 See Sorensen, *Possession*, 10–16, and the literature cited there.
- 18 On exorcism as a charismatic gift and an aspect of the rite of initiation in *Traditio apostolica* see Nicolotti, *Esorcismo*, 585–620; and R.J.S. Barrett-Lennard, *Christian Healing after the New Testament: Some Approaches to Illness in the Second, Third and Fourth*

evidence of Christian adjurations against evil spirits in another body of material: the spells, amulets, and manuals of occult procedures that have survived from Roman Egypt, where such texts written on papyrus or parchment have been preserved because of dry climatic conditions. If we compare what we find in these materials with the testimony of Christian writers in the second and third centuries, what can we extrapolate about the Christian practice of ad-hoc exorcism in that early period or later? Given the space allotted for this chapter, I shall focus on spells and amulets replete with Christian elements,<sup>19</sup> referring only occasionally to materials that are largely free of such elements. These spells and amulets are not all strictly exorcistic; many are meant to heal from sickness, most often fevers and chills, or to protect from other threats to life, such as poisonous animals. But since such threats were believed to be the work of evil spirits,<sup>20</sup> it is likely that similar formulae were used when directing or expelling evil spirits. Indeed, the two objectives—to be protected or delivered from threats to life and to be protected or delivered from evil spirits—are often combined in individual spells and amulets containing Christian elements.<sup>21</sup>

---

*Centuries* (Lanham, Md.: University Press of America, 1994), 233–76. On problems posed by the transmission of *Traditio apostolica* see Paul F. Bradshaw, Maxwell E. Johnson, and L. Edward Phillips, *The Apostolic Tradition: A Commentary*, Hermeneia: A Critical and Historical Commentary on the Bible (Minneapolis, Minn.: Fortress, 2002), 6–11; and Maxwell E. Johnson, *The Rites of Christian Initiation: Their Evolution and Interpretation*, 2nd ed. (Collegeville, Minn.: Liturgical Press, 2007), 96–110.

19 For a list of materials with Christian elements see Theodore S. de Bruyn and Jitse H.F. Dijkstra, “Greek Amulets and Formularies from Egypt Containing Christian Elements: A Checklist of Papyri, Parchments, Ostraka, and Tablets,” *Bulletin of the American Society of Papyrologists* 48 (2011): 159–214. When identifying an item in this paper, I refer to its publication in *PGM* or *SM*. For editions or revisions of an item prior to its publication in *PGM* or *SM*, see the introductions there. I provide references for editions, republications, or revisions subsequent to an item’s publication in *PGM* or *SM* at the first instance.

20 Böcher, *Dämonenfurcht*, 152–56.

21 E.g., *PGM* P 3, 5b, 9, 10, 12 (see now Franco Maltomini, “Un ‘utero errante’ di troppo? *PGM* 12 riconsiderato,” *ZPE* 160 [2007]: 167–74; and Cornelia E. Römer, “Gebet und Bannzauber des Severus von Antiochia gegen den Biss giftiger Tiere, oder: Maltomini hatte Recht,” *ZPE* 168 [2009]: 209–12), 13, and 17 (see now *P.Giss.Lit.* 5.4); *SM* 1 30 and 31 (republished in *BKT* IX 134); and *SM* II 84.

## 1 Christological Summaries

First, several amulets against fever and illness confirm that christological summaries were employed when directing evil spirits. One amulet, *SM* I 31 (V/VI),<sup>22</sup> opens with a declarative summary of the career of Christ: “[† Christ was born of the Virgin] Mary, and was crucified by Pontius Pilate, and was buried in a grave, and rose on the third day, and was taken up into the heavens, and . . .” In two other amulets the summary takes the form of a series of short acclamations: *SM* I 23 (V): “† Christ was born, amen. Christ was crucified, amen. Christ was buried, amen. Christ arose, amen. He has woken to judge the living and the dead;” *SM* I 35 (VI): “Christ was proclaimed in advance. Christ appeared. Christ suffered. Christ died. Christ was raised. Christ was taken up. Christ reigns.” From these amulets, I would suggest, we can infer that christological summaries, already used in ad-hoc exorcisms in the second century, continued to be so used well into late antiquity. (Christological acclamations also appear as preambles to exorcistic and healing injunctions in medieval and modern manuscripts.)<sup>23</sup> While the summaries in these amulets resemble the second article of ancient creeds, their wording does not correspond exactly to any known creeds.<sup>24</sup> However, despite the differences among them, the three

22 The date of an item, provided in Roman numerals in parentheses, is usually assigned on palaeographical grounds. IV–V = fourth or fifth century; IV/V = late fourth or early fifth century. I provide the date assigned in *PGM* or *SM*, referring the reader to de Bruyn and Dijkstra, “Greek Amulets,” table 1, when the date has subsequently been disputed.

23 A. Vassiliev, ed., *Anecdota Graeco-Byzantina: Pars Prior* (Moscow: Universitatis Caesareae, 1893), 339; Armand Delatte, *Anecdota Atheniensia*, vol. 1: *Textes grecs inédits relatifs à l’histoire des religions* (Liège: Vaillant-Carmanne, 1927), 146 and 616; Fritz Pradel, *Griechische und süditalienische Gebete, Beschwörungen und Rezepte des Mittelalters* (Giessen: Alfred Töpelmann, 1907), 13.23–14.6 with 48–49; and Agamemnon Tselikas, “Spells and Exorcisms in Three Post-Byzantine Manuscripts,” in *Greek Magic: Ancient, Medieval and Modern*, ed. J.C.B. Petropoulos (Abingdon and New York: Routledge, 2008), 75 and 77–78.

24 See Liuwe H. Westra, *The Apostles’ Creed: Origin, History, and Some Early Commentaries*, *Instrumenta Patristica et Mediaevalia*, vol. 43 (Turnhout: Brepols, 2002), 38–39. The overview of the second article of ancient creeds in Hans Lietzmann, “Symbolstudien III,” in *Kleine Schriften III: Studien zur Liturgie- und Symbolgeschichte zur Wissenschaftsgeschichte*, TU, Bd 74 (Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 1962), 198–208, should now be supplemented, for the fourth century, by Markus Vinzent, “Die Entstehung des ‘Römischen Glaubensbekenntnisses,’” in Wolfram Kinzig, Christoph Marksches, and Markus Vinzent, *Tauffragen und Bekenntnis: Studien zur sogenannten “Traditio Apostolica”, zu den “Interrogationes de fide” und zum “Römischen Glaubensbekenntnis,”* AKG, Bd 74 (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1999), 309–59. For complete texts of ancient *regulae fidei* and creeds

examples all use the aorist passive indicative (e.g., ἐγεννήθη) rather than the aorist passive participle (e.g., γεννηθέντα) found in ancient creeds. This suggests that they drew on a liturgical practice of reciting the summary in an acclamatory rather than a confessional form (“I/we believe that . . .”). This acclamatory form would be well suited to the imperative mode of exorcisms and healings. In *SM* I 23, for example, the acclamations are followed by an injunction commanding the fever to flee. In *SM* I 35, the acclamations continue directly with the assertion that Christ heals the woman in question, the certainty of the outcome as secure as the present reign of Christ.

These three amulets do not, however, help to decide what Origen was referring to when he spoke of exorcisms “by the name of Jesus, together with a recital of narratives about him.”<sup>25</sup> Recollections of miracles performed by Jesus also function as preambles to petitions or adjurations in amulets,<sup>26</sup> taking the form of *historiolae* commonly used in spells to bring an event in the mythic past to bear on the need or request at hand in the present.<sup>27</sup> In fact, in *SM* I 31, the declarative summary is followed by a recollection of healings, which then leads to a request for healing.

## 2 Esoteric Incantations

What, next, can amulets tell us about the use of esoteric incantations to direct or expel evil spirits? No apologist or polemicist in the second and third centuries—and later—wanted to be associated with such gibberish or, worse, sorcery. Celsus impugns Christian clergy by alleging that he “has seen books with *nomina barbara* of *daimones* and charlatantry in the possession of some presbyters;” these presbyters “promise nothing useful but everything that is harmful to humankind.”<sup>28</sup> Origen retorts by equating the allegations with the

---

see August Hahn and G. Ludwig Hahn, eds, *Bibliothek der Symbole und Glaubensregeln der alten Kirche*, 3rd ed. (Breslau: E. Morgenstern, 1897).

25 See n.11 above.

26 E.g., *PGM* P 5b, 18, 23; *SM* I 32; but see *SM* II 59, where the *historiola* is a preamble to a curse.

27 David Frankfurter, “Narrating Power: The Theory and Practice of the Magical *historiola* in Ritual Spells,” in *Ancient Magic and Ritual Power*, ed. Marvin Meyer and Paul Mirecki, RGRW, vol. 129 (Leiden: Brill, 1995), 457–76.

28 Origen, *Con. Cels.* 6.40 (SC 147.274): ἔφησεν ἑωρακένας παρά τισι πρεσβυτέροις τῆς ἡμετέρας δόξης τυγχάνουσι βιβλία, βάρβαρα δαιμόνων ὀνόματα ἔχοντα καὶ τερατείας· καὶ ἔφασκε τούτους—τούς δῆθεν πρεσβυτέρους τῆς ἡμετέρας δόξης—οὐδὲν μὲν χρηστὸν ὑπισχεῖσθαι πάντα δ' ἐπ' ἀνθρώπων βλάβαις. On the meaning of πρεσβύτεροι, see Nicolotti, *Esorcismo*, 384–85, who

manifestly false accusations that Christians eat the flesh of infants or have unrestrained sex with women; the polytheistic masses, says Origen, know such allegations to be untrue.<sup>29</sup> To expel demons, Origen elsewhere asserts (as we have already noted),<sup>30</sup> Christians do not use incantations, but only the name of Jesus, along with some words from scripture.

The evidence of amulets with Christian elements would suggest that the reality encompassed both poles of this antithesis, and the territory in between. Some amulets simply juxtapose Graeco-Egyptian and Christian elements. For instance, in an amulet in the Cologne collection, *SM I 20 (IV/V)*,<sup>31</sup> a petition that presumably would have been acceptable to Origen—"Lord God, Lord of all gods, heal Thaesas . . . release in the name of Jesus Christ"—is surrounded by elements that Celsus was scornful of—series of vowels, the names Ablanathamala (i.e., Ablanathanalba) and Akrammachamari, and *charaktêres* (esoteric signs), all common features of spells. The amulet enjoins these signs to heal Thaesas, ending with the customary closing formula, "now now, quickly quickly." A similar combination is found in another Cologne amulet, *SM I 21 (IV/V)*. It opens with the Christian acclamation "One Father, one Son, one Holy Spirit, amen," punctuated by three gammate crosses. This is followed by the palindrome Ablanathanalba written repeatedly in a diminishing, grape-cluster shape, a common device in amulets. Around this are *charaktêres* that again are enjoined, explicitly, to heal: "Holy *charaktêres*, heal Tiron, whom Palladia bore, from all shivering, tertian, quartan, or every-other-day or quotidian." Such direct invocation of *charaktêres*, common in ancient spells,<sup>32</sup> is also found in *SM I 23*. There the christological acclamation and accompanying injunction are followed by the drawing of a stele and two *charaktêres* that are, in turn, enjoined to chase away the fever "now, now, now, quickly, quickly, quickly." (A sixth-century amulet that juxtaposes a Christian and a Graeco-Egyptian healing formula, *SM I 34 [VI]*,<sup>33</sup> shows that such combinations continued later as well.) A last example, *PGM P 3 (IV)*, employs a typical Graeco-Egyptian formula appealing to Horus, Iaô Sabaôth Adônai, and the more opaque figure Salaman Tarchi to bind a scorpion-demon to "preserve this house with its occupants from all evil, from all bewitchment of spirits of the air and human

---

rightly takes it to refer to Christian clergy and dismisses the notion that here Celsus is referring only to heterodox or 'gnostic' Christians.

29 Origen, *Con. Cels.* 6.40 (SC 147.274).

30 See n.12 above.

31 See de Bruyn and Dijkstra, "Greek Amulets," 193, n.146.

32 See *SM I 21*, commentary on lines 10–12.

33 See de Bruyn and Dijkstra, "Greek Amulets," 194, n.148.



(evil) eye and terrible pain [and] sting of scorpion and snake, through the name of the highest god.”<sup>34</sup> This is followed by *vores mysticae* (esoteric sounds and words) that are also found in a protective spell that lacks any Christian elements, *SM* I 15.<sup>35</sup> All these traditional elements are framed by Christian ones. The Christian monogram  $\text{XMI}$  appears at the head of the papyrus,<sup>36</sup> and the spell ends with the injunction “Be on guard, O Lord, son of David according to the flesh, the one born of the holy virgin Mary, O holy one, highest God, from the Holy Spirit. Glory to you, O heavenly king, amen,” followed by several Christian monograms. The language of this injunction, which correctly attributes the human and divine origins of Jesus, suggests that the scribe was familiar with Christian liturgical and theological usage.

Other amulets lack the more obvious Graeco-Egyptian elements found in the above examples. But they nevertheless employ expressions customarily used in spells. Thus one amulet, *SM* I 22 (IV–V), directs the “power of Jesus Christ”—an expression used in spells when obtaining the power or qualities of a deity,<sup>37</sup> here punctuated three times by a Christian monogram comprising alpha, omega, and a staurogram—to heal a certain Eremega of various illnesses. Another amulet, *SM* I 25 (V), employs a variant of a formula frequently used to command a maleficent entity to flee because a greater power pursues it:<sup>38</sup> “Shivering, and fever with shivering, and fever, the Son of God pursues you.” Then the trisagion is used to enjoin God to heal: “Holy, holy, holy, Lord Sabaôth, heal Gennadia, your servant.” These two injunctions are framed by the acclamation “Jesus Christ is victorious.” Amulets like these suggest that the formal structure of Christian exorcism may not have been all that different from polytheistic adjurations; it was the powers, and the naming of the powers, that changed. Incidentally, all of the amulets we have reviewed thus far corroborate the claims of Christian apologists that their exorcists healed in the name of God or Jesus.

In other amulets the request to be protected or delivered from evil spirits takes the form and phraseology of Christian prayer. A remarkable amulet

34 Trans. *ACM*, 49–50. For the formula, cf. *PGM* P XXVIIIa–c. On the Artemesian scorpion and the power attributed to scorpions to protect against other animals, including poisonous ones, see Samson Eitrem, “Der Skorpion in Mythologie und Religionsgeschichte,” *Symbolae Osloenses* 7 (1928): 61–62 and 69–71; and Marcus N. Tod, “The Scorpion in Graeco-Roman Egypt,” *Journal of Egyptian Archaeology* 25 (1939): 55–61.

35 For the revised reading of the relevant lines in both texts see Robert W. Daniel, “Some  $\Phi\lambda\alpha\kappa\tau\eta\rho\iota\alpha$ ,” *ZPE* 25 (1977): 150–53.

36 On this monogram see de Bruyn and Dijkstra, “Greek Amulets,” 169, n.24.

37 See *PGM* P VII.1019, XXXV.21, LXI.9, 24.

38 See *P.Prag.* I 6, commentary on lines 1–5.



assigned to the fourth or fifth century, *PGM* P 13 (IV–V), preserves an extended liturgical invocation and epiclesis.<sup>39</sup> The invocation recounts the descent, birth, death, and ascent of “the god of the aeon”—an alternative to the christological summaries discussed above. The epiclesis describes this figure’s descent to the underworld, binding the adversary who rules there and releasing the souls he held captive—the exorcistic event *par excellence* that is the basis for the apotropaic petition with which the amulet concludes. In later amulets petitionary prayers are employed, some of them appealing to the intercessions of Mary and the saints. In *PGM* P 9 (VI),<sup>40</sup> Silvanus prays to God and St Serenus to drive out various demons and to deliver from every illness. The prayer is followed by the recitation of a portion of the Lord’s Prayer and the *incipits* of two gospels—texts that were believed to have an apotropaic effect.<sup>41</sup> So too, *SM* I 31, which we have already noted for its declarative christological summary and its recitation of healings performed by Jesus, concludes with a prayer for deliverance “in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit and . . .” Yet even at this late date, prayers for protection against evil spirits may preserve phraseology of an earlier era, as *PGM* P 13a (VI), a prayer copied by Dioscorus of Aphrodito, shows.<sup>42</sup>

### 3 Long Incantations

Finally, how elaborate or dramatic were the incantations used to direct or expel evil spirits? A pseudonymous tract on the way of life of itinerant Christian

39 I here correct my use of these terms in Theodore S. de Bruyn, “Ancient Applied Christology: Appeals to Christ in Greek Amulets in Late Antiquity,” in *From Logos to Christos: Essays in Christology in Honour of Joanne McWilliam*, ed. Ellen M. Leonard and Kate Merriman, Editions SR / Éditions SR, vol. 34 (Waterloo: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 2010), 6–7.

40 Joseph E. Sanzo, “Canonical Power: A ‘Tactical’ Approach to the Use of the Christian Canon in P. Berlin 954,” *Saint Shenouda Coptic Quarterly* 4 (2008): 28–45.

41 On the apotropaic use of the Lord’s Prayer see Thomas J. Kraus, “Manuscripts with the Lord’s Prayer—They Are More than Simply Witnesses to that Text Itself,” in *New Testament Manuscripts: Their Texts and Their World*, ed. Thomas J. Kraus and Tobias Nicklas, Texts and Editions for New Testament Study, vol. 2 (Leiden: Brill, 2006), 227–66. On gospel *incipits* see Joseph E. Sanzo, *Scriptural Incipits on Amulets from Late Antique Egypt: Text, Typology, and Theory*, STAC, Bd 84 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2014).

42 See Leslie S.B. MacCoull, “P. Cair. Masp. II 67188 Verso 1–5. The *Gnostica* of Dioscorus of Aphrodito,” *Tyche* 2 (1987): 95–97; *SM* II 65, commentary on lines 31–33; and David Jordan, “A Prayer Copied by Dioskoros of Kômê Aphroditês (PGM 13a),” *Tyche* 16 (2001): 87–88. I accept Jordan’s restoration of ἐπιχαλοῦμαι at line 1.

ascetics, written in the third or early fourth century and circulating in Egypt within the next century,<sup>43</sup> reveals that they could be quite elaborate.<sup>44</sup> One of the practices the writer disapproves of is the use of lengthy incantations when praying over demoniacs. When visiting them, one is to pray to God with faith, “not by combining many words or declaiming adjurations for human display so as to appear eloquent or endowed with a good memory.”<sup>45</sup>

An example of what the author may have had in mind can be found in the so-called ‘Great Magical Papyrus of Paris’, the longest of the manuals of procedures and spells found in the region of Thebes.<sup>46</sup> The manuscript, which has been assigned to the late third or fourth century,<sup>47</sup> preserves a procedure for the demon-possessed, *PGM P IV.3007–86*, that includes a long series of

- 
- 43 The writer censures cohabitation or mingling of male and female ascetics, an innovation that church authorities in the fourth century sought to end, substituting more socially acceptable institutions, such as separate monasteries for women and men. See pseudo-Clement, *Ep. ad virgines* 1.10.1–4 (F. Diekamp and F.X. Funk, eds, *Patres apostolici*, 2 vols, 3rd ed. (Tübingen: Laupp, 1913), 2.17–18; and Susanna Elm, *Virgins of God: The Making of Asceticism in Late Antiquity*, OCM (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996), 47–51, 162–64, 341, and 374–75.
- 44 Pseudo-Clement, *Ep. ad virgines*. For the versions see Mauritius Geerard, ed., *Clavis Patrum Graecorum*, vol. 1: *Patres antenicaeni* (Brepols: Turnhout, 1983), 6–7 (no. 1004). On the date and provenance see Nicolotti, *Esorcismo*, 621, and the literature cited there.
- 45 Pseudo-Clement, *Ep. ad uirgines* 1.12.2 (Diekamp and Funk, *Patres apostolici*, 2.22–23): μή ἐκ συνθέσεως πολλῶν λόγων ἢ μελέτας ἐξορκισμῶν πρὸς ἐπίδειξιν ἀνθρωπαρεσκείας πρὸς τὸ φανῆναι εὐλόλους ἢ μνήμονας ἡμᾶς. For the Coptic version see L.-Th. Lefort, ed., *Les pères apostoliques en copte*, CSCO, vols 135 and 136 (Leuven: L. Dubecq, 1952), 135.41–42. The Greek, Syriac, and Coptic versions can be conveniently compared at Nicolotti, *Esorcismo*, 622–24.
- 46 On the so-called ‘Theban Magical Library’ see Garth Fowden, *The Egyptian Hermes: A Historical Approach to the Late Pagan Mind* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1986), 168–70; W.J. Tait, “Theban Magic,” in *Hundred-Gated Thebes: Acts of a Colloquium on Thebes and the Theban Area in the Graeco-Roman Period*, ed. S.P. Vleeming, *Papyrologica Lugduno-Batava*, vol. 27 (Leiden: Brill, 1995), 169–82; William M. Brashear, “The Greek Magical Papyri: An Introduction and Survey; Annotated Bibliography (1928–1994),” in *Aufstieg und Niedergang der römischen Welt*, part 2, vol. 18/5: *Heidentum: Die religiösen Verhältnisse in den Provinzen*, ed. Wolfgang Haase (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1995), 3402–404; Jacco Dieleman, *Priests, Tongues, and Rites: The London-Leiden Magical Manuscripts and Translation in Egyptian Ritual (100–300 CE)*, RGRW, vol. 153 (Leiden: Brill, 2005), 12–15; and Richard Gordon, “Memory and Authority in the Magical Papyri,” in *Historical and Religious Memory in the Ancient World*, ed. Beate Dignas and R.R.R. Smith (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 147–51.
- 47 F. Ll. Griffith, “The Date of the Old Coptic Texts and their Relation to Christian Coptic,” *Zeitschrift für ägyptische Sprache und Altertumskunde* 39 (1901): 78–82.

adjurations alluding to important events in Jewish biblical and postbiblical narratives.<sup>48</sup> The exorcist is instructed to prepare a mixture while reciting *voces mysticae*, to write *voces mysticae* on a tin amulet to be hung on the possessed, and to recite the adjurations while facing the possessed. While the litany clearly originated in a Jewish milieu, it shows signs of having been reworked by an outsider impressed with the reputed power of Jewish adjurations.<sup>49</sup> This probably explains the opening words of the litany: “I adjure you by the god of the Hebrews, Jesus.” The writer employs a *nomen sacrum* for ‘god’ (θεῦ), as one finds elsewhere in the manual,<sup>50</sup> but not for ‘Jesus’, as one would expect of a scribe familiar with Christian conventions.<sup>51</sup> The phrase adds to evidence

48 The literature is considerable: Adolf Deissmann, *Light from the Ancient East: The New Testament Illustrated by Recently Discovered Texts of the Graeco-Roman World*, trans. Lionel R.M. Strachan (New York and London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1927), 260–63; Wilfred L. Knox, “Jewish Liturgical Exorcism,” *HTR* 31 (1938): 191–203; Samson Eitrem, *Some Notes on the Demonology in the New Testament*, Symbolae Osloenses, vol. 20, 2nd ed. (Oslo: Universitetsforlaget, 1966), 15–30; *GMPT*, 96–97; Roy Kotansky, “Greek Exorcistic Amulets,” in *Ancient Magic and Ritual Power*, ed. Marvin Meyer and Paul Mirecki, RGRW, vol. 129 (Leiden: Brill, 1995), 262–66; Bernd Kollmann, *Jesus und die Christen als Wundertäter: Studien zu Magie, Medizin und Schamanismus in Antike und Christentum*, Forschungen zur Religion und Literatur des Alten und Neuen Testaments, Bd 170 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck and Ruprecht, 1996), 156–60; Reinhold Merkelbach, ed., *Abrasax: Ausgewählte Papyri religiösen und magischen Inhalts*, vol. 4: *Exorzismen und jüdisch/christlich beeinflusste Texte*, Papyrologica Coloniensia, Bd 17/4 (Cologne: Westdeutscher Verlag, 1996), 36–43; Morton Smith, “Jewish Elements in the Magical Papyri,” in *Studies in the Cult of Yahweh: New Testament, Early Christianity, and Magic*, ed. Shaye J.D. Cohen, RGRW, vol. 130/2 (Leiden: Brill, 1996), 241–56; Philip S. Alexander, “Jewish Elements in Gnosticism and Magic c. CE 70–c. CE 270,” in *The Cambridge History of Judaism*, vol. 3: *The Early Roman Period*, ed. William Horbury, W.D. Davies, and John Sturdy (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 1073–74; Pieter W. van der Horst, “The Great Magical Papyrus of Paris (PGM IV) and the Bible,” in *Jews and Christians in their Graeco-Roman Context: Selected Essays on Early Judaism, Samaritanism, Hellenism, and Christianity*, ed. Pieter W. van der Horst, WUNT 1, vol. 196 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2006), 269–79; and Lynn LiDonnici, “According to the Jews: Identified (and Identifying) ‘Jewish’ Elements in the Greek Magical Papyri,” in *Heavenly Tablets: Interpretation, Identity and Tradition in Ancient Judaism*, ed. Lynn LiDonnici and Andrea Lieber, Supplements to the Journal for the Study of Judaism, vol. 119 (Leiden: Brill, 2007), 95–99.

49 Alexander, “Jewish Elements,” 1074; and Gideon Bohak, *Ancient Jewish Magic: A History* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 206–207.

50 Ludwig Traube, *Nomina Sacra. Versuch einer Geschichte der christliche Kürzung*, Quellen und Untersuchungen zur lateinischen Philologie des Mittelalters, Bd 2 (Munich: Beck, 1907), 38–40.

51 See de Bruyn and Dijkstra, “Greek Amulets,” 169, n.22 and 171.

that the power of the name 'Jesus' when dealing with spirits had become more widely known, alongside the already established reputation of 'the God of the Hebrews' or 'the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob'.<sup>52</sup>

As is often the case with normative prescriptions, the counsel of the above-mentioned tract was honoured as much in the breach as the observance. The impulse to pile on adjurations when driving out evil spirits was, in fact, persistent. For example, *PGM P 10 (VI)*,<sup>53</sup> a Greek amulet meant to protect the wearer from all manner of harm, waking or sleeping, comprises six long adjurations that command the evil spirits by "[the four] gospels," "the God of Israel," "[the seven circles] of heaven," "the 'Amen' and the 'Alleluia' and the 'Gospel of the Lord,'" and "the Father and the [Son] and the Holy [Spirit]." Likewise, a Coptic amulet that may date from the early Islamic period combines a set of apotropaic texts commonly cited in Christian amulets—LXX Psalm 90:1–2 and the *incipits* of the four gospels<sup>54</sup>—with twelve short adjurations to protect a certain Philoxenos from "all [harm] and all evil and all sorcery and all injury induced by the stars and all the demons and all the deeds of the hostile adversary."<sup>55</sup> Some Coptic spells reveal a marked predilection for elaborate incantations referring to gnostic powers, hosts of angels and archangels, liturgical formulae, *voices mysticae*, *charaktères*, material preparations—in short, the entire technical repertoire that Christians were supposed to eschew, according to their

- 
- 52 See *PGM P IV.1227–64*, another procedure for casting out demons in the same manuscript. The incantation begins with the following invocation, expressed in Egyptian but written in Greek characters: "Hail, God of Abraham; hail, God of Isaac; hail, God of Jacob; Jesus Chrêstos, the Holy Spirit, the Son of the Father, who is above/below the seven, who is within the seven. Bring Iaô Sabaôth; may your power issue forth from NN, and may you drive away this unclean daimon, Satan, who is upon him" (*PGM P IV.1231–39*). Space does not permit the discussion this text requires; I treat it at length in a monograph in preparation. On the widespread use of the formulae 'the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob' and 'the God of the Hebrews' in incantations see Origen, *Con. Cels.* 1.22 and 4.33–34 (SC 132.130 and 136.266–70); and Nicolotti, *Esorcismo*, 442–49.
- 53 See de Bruyn and Dijkstra, "Greek Amulets," 189, n.133.
- 54 See Sanzo, *Amulets*, 89–90 (no. 13). On the apotropaic value of LXX Psalm 90 see Juan Chapa, "Su demoni e angeli: il Salmo 90 nel suo contesto," in *I papiri letterari cristiani: atti del convegno internazionale di studi in memoria di Mario Naldini, Firenze, 10–11 Giugno 2010*, ed. Guido Bastianini and Angelo Casanova (Florence: Istituto Papirologico "G. Vitelli," 2011), 59–90; and Thomas J. Kraus, "Septuaginta-Psalm 90 in apotropäischer Verwendung: Vorüberlegungen für eine kritische Edition und (bisheriges) Datenmaterial," *Biblische Notizen* n.F. 125 (2005): 39–73.
- 55 James Drescher, "A Coptic Amulet," in *Coptic Studies in Honor of Walter Ewing Crum*, ed. Thomas Whittemore (Boston: The Byzantine Institute, 1950), 265–70, with discussion of the date at 266; trans. *ACM*, 115–16.

second- and third-century apologists.<sup>56</sup> The tendency to multiply adjurations was not limited, however, to exorcists with syncretistic tendencies, as we can see from a lengthy Coptic hymn and prayer, ‘The Praise of Michael the Archangel’.<sup>57</sup> In fact, Greek exorcisms attributed to church fathers, several now taken up into the liturgical books of the Orthodox church, contain a seemingly endless series of adjurations, to be uttered until the demon leaves.<sup>58</sup>

#### 4 Conclusion

To sum up: the evidence of Greek spells and amulets replete with Christian elements partly confirms and partly contradicts what Christian apologists say about the Christian practice of exorcism. There are many indications that Christians adjured evil spirits by the name or power of Jesus, and that the invocation of his name or power could be accompanied by a creedal acclamation, as the apologists claim. But at the same time Christian exorcists as likely as not reiterated customary practices of incantation, including the uttering of esoteric names, threatening injunctions, and multiple adjurations.

In an effort to rehabilitate the term ‘syncretism’ as a way of understanding how Christian ‘holy men’ or ‘prophets’ in late-antique Egypt both preserved and altered older Egyptian religious traditions, David Frankfurter has drawn on the theory of *habitus* or ‘habit-memory’.<sup>59</sup> What people expected of Christian exorcists, and the ways in which Christian exorcists responded, would have had to be recognisable and meaningful within their social contexts. The extent to which the actions of a particular exorcist would have conformed to or diverged from, for example, the normative description of an Origen would have depended on historical and contextual variables that might constrain the

---

56 See e.g., *ACM*, 275–92 (nos 129–32), a portfolio of spells for various purposes, three of which name a certain Severus, son of Joanna, as the beneficiary.

57 *ACM*, 323–41 (no. 135).

58 E.g., Vassiliev, *Anecdota Graeco-Byzantina*, 332–33; Delatte, *Anecdota Atheniensia*, 228–62; Louis Delatte, *Un office byzantin d'exorcisme (Ms. de la Lavra du Mont Athos, § 20)* (Gembloux: J. Duculot, 1954), *passim*, with remarks at 102 and 141–46. Cf. Richard P.H. Greenfield, *Traditions of Belief in Late Byzantine Demonology* (Amsterdam: Adolf M. Hakkert, 1988), 141–47.

59 David Frankfurter, “Syncretism and the Holy Man in Late Antique Egypt,” *J ECS* 11 (2003): 344–48.

exorcist, either consciously or unconsciously:<sup>60</sup> the background and training of the exorcist; the presence of alternatives that would incline the exorcist to behave similarly to or differently than the competition; the strength of institutions and authorities capable of cultivating or imposing a normative practice; the latitude afforded the exorcist by the nature of his or her role and authority; the expectations of people seeking relief from sickness and danger; and so on. In short, there would have been various exorcistic practices, some more innovative and distinctive, others more customary and traditional.

While one cannot posit an exact correspondence between processes of preservation and innovation in the ritual practice of exorcism and processes of preservation and innovation in the scribal practice of amulet-writing,<sup>61</sup> the fact that amulets manifest both distinctive Christian innovations and traditional Egyptian customs—in varying relationships—suggests that the same was likely true for exorcism. The persistence of deeply rooted fears and expectations, such as the fear of scorpions and snakes and the demand for amulets against them, could elicit a customary response, perhaps slightly modified as in *PGM P 3*, or a fully developed Christian alternative, as in a prayer attributed to Severus of Antioch, *PGM P 12* (VII or later).<sup>62</sup> An exorcist with a liturgical culture akin to that attested in *PGM P 5b* (v), with its several allusions to the cult of saints in sixth-century Oxyrhynchus, would have formulated an exorcism differently than, say, an exorcist with a liturgical culture akin to that attested in *PGM P 13*, which rehearses the cosmological drama of the descent and ascent of the “god of the aeon.” While some exorcists would have eschewed the recital of *vores mysticae*, as in *SM I 22*, others would have incorporated them, as in *SM I 20*, because that was simply what an exorcist did and what others expected. It is not possible here to explore further any clues to the social circumstances that would have elicited these different expectations and responses, but the evidence leaves no doubt that there were many permutations to what Christian exorcists—or exorcists appealing to the Christians’ god—would have said when warding off or expelling demons.

60 See David Frankfurter, “Dynamics of Ritual Expertise in Antiquity and Beyond: Towards a New Taxonomy of ‘Magicians,’” in *Magic and Ritual in the Ancient World*, ed. Paul Mirecki and Marvin Meyer, RGRW, vol. 141 (Leiden: Brill, 2002), 159–78.

61 Frankfurter, “Syncretism,” 385.

62 See de Bruyn and Dijkstra, “Greek Amulets,” 189, n.134, where, however, the page referred to in Maltomini, “Un ‘utero errante,’” should be 168.

## Bibliography

- Justin Martyr. *Apologia* (Charles Munier, ed., *Justin. Apologie pour les chrétiens*, SC, vol. 507. Paris: Éditions du Cerf, 2006).
- . *Dialogus cum Tryphone* (Philippe Bobichon, ed., *Justin Martyr. Dialogue avec Tryphon*, 2 vols, Paradosis, vol. 47. Fribourg: Academic Press and Éditions Saint-Paul, 2003).
- Origen. *Contra Celsum* (Marcel Borret, ed., *Origène. Contre Celse*, SC, vols 132, 136, 147, 150, and 227. Paris: Éditions du Cerf, 1967–1976).
- Pseudo-Clement. *Epistula ii ad uirgines* (F. Diekamp and F.X. Funk, eds. *Patres apostolici*, 2 vols, 3rd ed. Tübingen: In Libraria Henrici Laupp, 1913).
- Tertullian. *Apologeticum* (Eligius Dekkers, ed., *Tertulliani Opera*, CCL, vol. 1, 77–171. Turnhout: Brepols, 1952).
- Alexander, Philip S. “Jewish Elements in Gnosticism and Magic c. CE 70–c. CE 270.” In *The Cambridge History of Judaism*, vol. 3, *The Early Roman Period*, edited by William Horbury, W.D. Davies, and John Sturdy, 1052–78. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999.
- Barrett-Lennard, R.J.S. *Christian Healing after the New Testament: Some Approaches to Illness in the Second, Third and Fourth Centuries*. Lanham, Md.: University Press of America, 1994.
- Betz, Hans Dieter, ed. *The Greek Magical Papyri in Translation, Including the Demotic Spells*, vol. 1, 2nd ed. Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1992.
- Böcher, Otto. *Dämonenfurcht und Dämonenabwehr: Ein Beitrag zur Vorgeschichte der christlichen Taufe*. Beiträge zur Wissenschaft vom Alten und Neuen Testament, Fünfte Folge, Bd 10. Stuttgart: W. Kohlhammer, 1970.
- Bohak, Gideon. *Ancient Jewish Magic: A History*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008.
- Bovon, François, and Pierre Geoltrain, eds. *Écrits apocryphes chrétiens 1*, Bibliothèque de la Pléiade. Paris: Gallimard, 1997.
- Bradshaw, Paul F. *The Search for the Origins of Christian Worship: Sources and Methods for the Study of Early Liturgy*, 2nd ed. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002.
- Bradshaw, Paul F., Maxwell E. Johnson, and L. Edward Phillips. *The Apostolic Tradition: A Commentary*, Hermeneia: A Critical and Historical Commentary on the Bible. Minneapolis, Minn.: Fortress, 2002.
- Brashear, William M. “The Greek Magical Papyri: An Introduction and Survey; Annotated Bibliography (1928–1994).” In *Aufstieg und Niedergang der römischen Welt*, part 2, vol. 18/5: *Heidentum: Die religiösen Verhältnisse in den Provinzen*, edited by Wolfgang Haase, 3380–684. Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1995.
- Bremmer, Jan N. “Magic in the Apocryphal Acts of the Apostles.” In *The Metamorphosis of Magic from Late Antiquity to the Early Modern Period*, edited by Jan N. Bremmer



- and Jan R. Veenstra, *Groningen Studies in Cultural Change*, vol. 1, 51–70. Leuven: Peeters, 2002.
- Chapa, Juan. “Su demoni e angeli: il Salmo 90 nel suo contesto.” In *I papiri letterari cristiani: atti del convegno internazionale di studi in memoria di Mario Naldini, Firenze, 10–11 Giugno 2010*, edited by Guido Bastianini and Angelo Casanova, 59–90. Florence: Istituto Papirologico “G. Vitelli”, 2011.
- Daniel Robert W. “Some Φυλακτήρια.” *ZPE* 25 (1977): 145–54.
- Daniel, Robert W., and Franco Maltomini, eds. *Supplementum Magicum*, 2 vols, Papyrologica Coloniensia, vol. 16. Opladen: Westdeutscher Verlag, 1991–1992.
- de Bruyn, Theodore S. “Ancient Applied Christology: Appeals to Christ in Greek Amulets in Late Antiquity.” In *From Logos to Christos: Essays in Christology in Honour of Joanne McWilliam*, edited by Ellen M. Leonard and Kate Merriman, Editions SR / Éditions SR, vol. 34, 3–18. Waterloo: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 2010.
- de Bruyn, Theodore S., and Jitse H.F. Dijkstra. “Greek Amulets and Formularies from Egypt Containing Christian Elements: A Checklist of Papyri, Parchments, Ostraka, and Tablets.” *Bulletin of the American Society of Papyrologists* 48 (2011): 159–214.
- Deissmann, Adolf. *Light from the Ancient East: The New Testament Illustrated by Recently Discovered Texts of the Graeco-Roman World*. Translated by Lionel R.M. Strachan from the 4th German edition. London and New York: Hodder and Stoughton, 1927.
- Delatte, Armand. *Anecdota Atheniensia*, vol. 1: *Textes grecs inédits relatifs à l'histoire des religions*, Bibliothèque de la Faculté de Philosophie et Lettres de l'Université de Liège, vol. 36. Liège: H. Vaillant-Carmanne and Paris: Édouard Champion, 1927.
- Delatte, Louis. *Un office byzantin d'exorcisme (Ms. de la Lavra du Mont Athos, 9 20)*. Gembloux: J. Duculot, 1954.
- Dieleman, Jacco. *Priests, Tongues, and Rites: The London-Leiden Magical Manuscripts and Translation in Egyptian Ritual (100–300 CE)*, RGRW, vol. 153. Leiden: Brill, 2005.
- Dölger, Franz Joseph. *Der Exorcismus im altchristlichen Taufritual: Eine religionsgeschichtliche Studie*, Studien zur Geschichte und Kultur des Altertums, Bd 3/1–2. Paderborn: Ferdinand Schöningh, 1909.
- Drescher, James. “A Coptic Amulet.” In *Coptic Studies in Honor of Walter Ewing Crum*, edited by Thomas Whittemore, 265–70. Boston: The Byzantine Institute, 1950.
- Eitrem, Samson. “Der Skorpion in Mythologie und Religionsgeschichte.” *Symbolae Osloenses* 7 (1928): 53–82.
- . *Some Notes on the Demonology in the New Testament*, Symbolae Osloenses, vol. 20, 2nd ed. Oslo: Universitetsforlaget, 1966.
- Elm, Susanna. *Virgins of God: The Making of Asceticism in Late Antiquity*, OCM. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996.
- Fowden, Garth. *The Egyptian Hermes: A Historical Approach to the Late Pagan Mind*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1986.



- Frankfurter, David. "Narrating Power: The Theory and Practice of the Magical *historiola* in Ritual Spells." In *Ancient Magic and Ritual Power*, edited by Marvin Meyer and Paul Mirecki, RGRW, vol. 129, 457–76. Leiden: Brill, 1995.
- . "Dynamics of Ritual Expertise in Antiquity and Beyond: Towards a New Taxonomy of 'Magicians'." In *Magic and Ritual in the Ancient World*, edited by Paul Mirecki and Marvin Meyer, RGRW, vol. 141, 159–78. Leiden: Brill, 2002.
- . "Syncretism and the Holy Man in Late Antique Egypt." *J ECS* 11 (2003): 339–85.
- Geerard, Mauritius, ed. *Clavis Patrum Graecorum*, vol. 1, *Patres antenicaeni*. Brepols: Turnhout, 1983.
- Gordon, Richard. "Memory and Authority in the Magical Papyri." In *Historical and Religious Memory in the Ancient World*, edited by Beate Dignas and R.R.R. Smith, 145–80. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012.
- Greenfield, Richard P.H. *Traditions of Belief in Late Byzantine Demonology*. Amsterdam: Adolf M. Hakkert, 1988.
- Griffith, F.L. "The Date of the Old Coptic Texts and their Relation to Christian Coptic." *Zeitschrift für ägyptische Sprache und Altertumskunde* 39 (1901): 78–82.
- Hahn, August, and G. Ludwig Hahn, eds. *Bibliothek der Symbole und Glaubensregeln der alten Kirche*, 3rd ed. Breslau: E. Morgenstern, 1897.
- Johnson, Maxwell E. *The Rites of Christian Initiation: Their Evolution and Interpretation*, 2nd ed. Collegeville, Minn.: Liturgical Press, 2007.
- Jordan, David. "A Prayer Copied by Dioskoros of Kômê Aphroditês (PGM 13a)." *Tyche* 16 (2001): 87–90.
- Knox, Wilfred L. "Jewish Liturgical Exorcism." *HTR* 31 (1938): 191–203.
- Kollmann, Bernd. *Jesus und die Christen als Wundertäter: Studien zu Magie, Medizin und Schamanismus in Antike und Christentum*, Forschungen zur Religion und Literatur des Alten und Neuen Testaments, Bd 170. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck and Ruprecht, 1996.
- Kotansky, Roy. "Greek Exorcistic Amulets." In *Ancient Magic and Ritual Power*, edited by Marvin Meyer and Paul Mirecki, RGRW, vol. 129, 243–77. Leiden: Brill, 1995.
- Kraus, Thomas J. "Manuscripts with the *Lord's Prayer*—They Are More than Simply Witnesses to that Text Itself." In *New Testament Manuscripts: Their Texts and Their World*, edited by Thomas J. Kraus and Tobias Nicklas, Texts and Editions for New Testament Study, vol. 2, 227–66. Leiden: Brill, 2006.
- . "Septuaginta-Psalm 90 in apotropäischer Verwendung: Vorüberlegungen für eine kritische Edition und (bisheriges) Datenmaterial." *Biblische Notizen* n.F. 125 (2005): 39–73.
- Leeper, Elizabeth A. "Exorcism in Early Christianity." PhD diss., Duke University, 1991.
- Lefort, L.-Th., ed. *Les pères apostoliques en copte*, CSCO, vols 135 and 136. Leuven: L. Dubecq, 1952.

- LiDonnici, Lynn. "‘According to the Jews:’ Identified (and Identifying) ‘Jewish’ Elements in the *Greek Magical Papyri*." In *Heavenly Tablets: Interpretation, Identity and Tradition in Ancient Judaism*, edited by Lynn LiDonnici and Andrea Lieber, Supplements to the Journal for the Study of Judaism, vol. 119, 87–108. Leiden: Brill, 2007.
- Lietzmann, Hans. "Symbolstudien III." In *Kleine Schriften III: Studien zur Liturgie- und Symbolgeschichte zur Wissenschaftsgeschichte*, TU, Bd 74, 194–211. Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 1962.
- MacCoull, Leslie S.B. "P. Cair. Masp. II 67188 Verso 1–5. The *Gnostica* of Dioscorus of Aphrodito." *Tyche* 2 (1987): 95–97.
- Maltomini, Franco. "Un ‘utero errante’ di troppo? PGM 12 riconsiderato." *ZPE* 160 (2007): 167–74.
- Merkelbach, Reinhold. *Abrasax: Ausgewählte Papyri religiösen und magischen Inhalts*, vol. 4: *Exorzismen und jüdisch/christlich beeinflusste Texte*, Papyrologica Coloniensia, vol. 17/4. Cologne: Westdeutscher Verlag, 1996.
- Meyer, Marvin, and Richard Smith, eds. *Ancient Christian Magic: Coptic Texts of Ritual Power*. San Francisco: HarperCollins, 1994.
- Nicolotti, Andrea. *Esorcismo cristiano e possessione diabolica tra II e III secolo*, Instrumenta Patristica et Mediaevalia, vol. 54. Turnhout: Brepols, 2011.
- Oates, John F., Roger S. Bagnall, Sarah J. Clackson, Alexandra A. O’Brien, Joshua D. Sosin, Terry G. Wilfong, and Klaas A. Worp, eds. *Checklist of Greek, Latin, Demotic and Coptic Papyri, Ostraca and Tablets*, <http://scriptorium.lib.duke.edu/papyrus/texts/clist.html>, May 2014.
- Pradel, Fritz. *Griechische und süditalienische Gebete, Beschwörungen und Rezepte des Mittelalters*, Religionsgeschichtliche Versuche und Vorarbeiten, Bd 3/3. Giessen: Alfred Töpelmann, 1907.
- Preisendanz, Karl, and Albert Henrichs, eds. *Papyri Graecae Magicae: Die griechischen Zauberpapyri*, 2 vols, 2nd ed. Stuttgart: Teubner, 1974–1975.
- Römer, Cornelia E. "Gebet und Bannzauber des Severus von Antiochia gegen den Biss giftiger Tiere, oder: Maltomini hatte recht." *ZPE* 168 (2009): 209–12.
- Sanzo, Joseph E. "Canonical Power: A ‘Tactical’ Approach to the Use of the Christian Canon in P. Berlin 954." *Saint Shenouda Coptic Quarterly* 4 (2008): 28–45.
- . *Scriptural Incipits on Amulets from Late Antique Egypt: Text, Typology, and Theory*, STAC, Bd 84. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2014.
- Smith, Morton. "Jewish Elements in the Magical Papyri." In *Studies in the Cult of Yahweh: New Testament, Early Christianity, and Magic*, edited by Shaye J.D. Cohen, RGRW, vol. 130/2, 241–56. Leiden: Brill, 1996.
- Smulders, P. "Some Riddles in the Apostles’ Creed: II. Creeds and Rules of Faith." *Bijdragen* 32 (1971): 350–66.

- Sorensen, Eric. *Possession and Exorcism in the New Testament and Early Christianity*. WUNT 2, vol. 157. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2002.
- Tait, W.J. "Theban Magic." In *Hundred-Gated Thebes: Acts of a Colloquium on Thebes and the Theban Area in the Graeco-Roman Period*, edited by S.P. Vleeming, Papyrologica Lugduno-Batava, vol. 27, 169–82. Leiden: Brill, 1995.
- Thraede, Klaus. "Exorcismus." *Reallexikon für Antike und Christentum* 7 (1969): 44–117.
- Tod, Marcus N. "The Scorpion in Graeco-Roman Egypt." *Journal of Egyptian Archaeology* 25 (1939): 55–61.
- Traube, Ludwig. *Nomina Sacra. Versuch einer Geschichte der christliche Kürzung, Quellen und Untersuchungen zur lateinischen Philologie des Mittelalters*, Bd 2. Munich: Beck, 1907.
- Tselikas, Agamemnon. "Spells and Exorcisms in Three Post-Byzantine Manuscripts." In *Greek Magic: Ancient, Medieval and Modern*, edited by J.C.B. Petropoulos, 72–81. Abingdon and New York: Routledge, 2008.
- Twelftree, Graham H. *In the Name of Jesus: Exorcism among Early Christians*. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2007.
- Van der Horst, Pieter W. "The Great Magical Papyrus of Paris (PGM IV) and the Bible." In *Jews and Christians in their Graeco-Roman Context: Selected Essays on Early Judaism, Samaritanism, Hellenism, and Christianity*, edited by Pieter W. van der Horst, WUNT 1, vol. 196, 269–79. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2006.
- Vassiliev, A., ed. *Anecdota Graeco-Byzantina: Pars Prior*. Moscow: Universitatis Caesareae, 1893.
- Vinzent, Markus. "Die Entstehung des 'Römischen Glaubensbekenntnisses.'" In Wolfram Kinzig, Christoph Marksches, and Markus Vinzent, *Taufragen und Bekenntnis: Studien zur sogenannten "Traditio Apostolica", zu den "Interrogationes de fide" und zum "Römischen Glaubensbekenntnis"*, AKG, Bd 74, 185–409. Berlin and New York: Walter de Gruyter, 1999.
- Westra, Liuwe H. *The Apostles' Creed: Origin, History, and Some Early Commentaries*, Instrumenta Patristica et Mediaevalia, vol. 43. Turnhout: Brepols, 2002.

**PART 2**

*The Late Antique East*





## On Being a Christian in Late Antiquity: St Basil the Great between the Desert and the City

*Andrew Louth*

The story of the origins of Christian monasticism has become so familiar that we are scarcely aware of how it is rooted in the historical evidence—or not, as I think the case really is. Monasticism started in the Egyptian desert, we are told. There we find from the beginning the three classical forms of Christian monasticism: the eremitical life with St Antony the Great, the cœnobitic life with St Pachomios, and the *lavra* or the *skete*, as it was later called, with St Makarios and St Hilarion. Out of these beginnings, Christian monasticism developed, and the traditional account looks to Syria, Palestine, Gaza and Sinai, and in the West to Lerins, Marseille, and to the extraordinary story of Celtic monasticism. There follows a story of constant vicissitudes, though quickly there emerges in the West a thread that later becomes a steady cord, linking monasticism with its roots through St Benedict and his rule.

What is problematic about this story? Well, two things, it seems to me. First of all, notice how pervasive it is: the Egyptian desert becoming a city, or even paradise, lodges itself in the Christian unconscious very quickly. Think of the role of the story of St Antony in the conversion of St Augustine; or, in a different vein, the way Sulpicius Severus, in his *Vita* and, perhaps especially, *Dialogorum* on St Martin of Tours, is at pains to resist any comparison that would put St Martin in the shadow of the great Egyptian figures such as St Antony. However, though we can trace back this sense of the pre-eminence of Egypt, Egypt itself is not pre-eminent in the actual evidence. The most influential account of the lives and teaching of the Egyptian fathers is found in *Apophthegmata patrum*, which only emerges very late—towards the end of the fifth century—and is of a complexity that still waits a convincing unravelling. It was intentionally, deliberately, the picture of a golden age, dimly perceived from a much later period by one of the last denizens of the Egyptian desert, who had left the desert, as it became an increasingly dangerous place to live because of the incursion of those the Greeks called ‘barbarians’. I do not think that it is an utterly ahistorical account—some aspects of it are borne out by earlier evidence—but it cannot be read—historically at any rate—without some awareness of the warm and regretful memories of an unknown monk or monks, from Skete,

putting together the sayings and stories probably somewhere in Syria. But the second thing that is wrong with the traditional story is closely related to this question of the historical evidence. If we trace through the historical evidence, then it becomes apparent that Egypt is not the only, not even perhaps the earliest, place where Christian monasticism established itself. The fourth-century evidence for Egypt is Athanasios' *Vita Antonii*, the Pachomian material, and the writings of Evagrius: Athanasios' *uita* is clearly a special case, telling us as much about the way in which Athanasios presented the great Egyptian father, and by implication the monasticism of which he was emblematic, as supporting pillars of synodal orthodoxy, fashioned by bishops such as himself; the Pachomian material has probably already been sifted by later Coptic monasticism, notably Shenuda; while no one could think that Evagrius was typical of anything—he is evidently a towering genius in his exploration of the metaphysical underpinning of the ascetic life. There are, of course, the letters of St Antony himself, but their complex textual tradition again suggests that the access they provide to their author is far from straightforward. If we move on, there is the genre of travellers' tales—*Historia monachorum in Aegypto* and *Historia Lausiaca*—which are full of interest, and confirm some aspects of the presentation of the Desert Fathers in *Apophthegmata*, and then the conferences of John Cassian, which are presented as eye-witness accounts of (oddly) rather obscure Egyptian fathers, whose loquacity in their dispensing spiritual advice seems far removed from the laconic dark sayings we find in *Apophthegmata*.

The historical evidence, then, does not consist of a kind of direct eye-witness core, presented by the sayings and lives of the fathers, around which we can group various attempts, more distanced from direct experience, to appropriate and assimilate their teaching and example. Rather—partly because of, and partly creative of—the sense of the Egyptian desert as a golden age, as the restoration of paradise, there is the paradoxical sense that the closer we seem to come to the living words of the desert fathers, the less we can actually hear.

The point of this introduction is to clear a little space to enable us to hear another early monastic voice, which genuinely belongs to the middle of the fourth century, but which has been largely neglected. I refer, of course, to St Basil the Great and his monastic writings and reflections on the contemplative life. The extent to which he is left in the shadows by scholarly accounts of monasticism is amazing. He is not mentioned at all in the classic work on early eastern monasticism—Derwas Chitty's *The Desert a City*<sup>1</sup>—or in the much more recent introduction to the literature of early monasticism—William

---

1 Derwas J. Chitty, *The Desert a City* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1966).

Harmless' *Desert Christians*.<sup>2</sup> But, unlike the historical evidence I have briefly surveyed, what we find in Basil's writings is contemporary reflection on early attempts at pursuing the monastic life among Christians.

Not that Basil himself was entirely free from the lure of Egypt. When, after his return from Athens—regarded by St Gregory of Nazianzus as a betrayal of their friendship—he set off on what Gregory refers to as 'voyages', it seems that he was—in company with, or perhaps better in pursuit of, Eustathios of Sebaste—making a tour of the monastic centres of the mid-fourth century: not just Egypt, but Coele-Syria, Palestine, and Mesopotamia, as is apparent from later references in his letters.<sup>3</sup> (It is actually possible that Basil never made it to Egypt, in which case Egypt remained for him a place only of report.)<sup>4</sup> Basil was, then, well aware of contemporary monastic movements, and the places—Egypt, Palestine, and Syria—that occupy a central role in traditional accounts of the rise of monasticism, but there were other influences. It is worth exploring, even if briefly, these influences, for they alert us to other aspects of the Christian monastic story, obscured by the traditional account. These aspects are twofold. Firstly, there is the question of Christian pre-monastic asceticism. It is striking that in Athanasios' *vita*, when Antony finally responds to the call to leave all and devote himself to a life of asceticism, he places his sister with "known and trusted virgins," and he himself soon finds an "old man, who had lived the ascetic life in solitude from his youth."<sup>5</sup> So in a *vita*, which is often read as the account of the first monk, though the *vita* itself makes no such unambiguous claim,<sup>6</sup> there are clear references to earlier forms of Christian asceticism: in particular, groups of virgins (or widows), of whom we know from other sources, such as *Didascalia apostolorum*, and solitary ascetics in villages. We can trace this background in Basil's own life. Whatever it was that Basil developed, there had already developed a kind of ascetic family community in which his sister Macrina—according to his brother Gregory of Nyssa, an important influence on Basil himself, though never mentioned by him—played a

2 William Harmless, *Desert Christians: An Introduction to the Literature of Early Monasticism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004).

3 See Philip Rousseau, *Basil of Caesarea*, TCH, vol. 20 (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1994), 73.

4 *Ibid.*, 73, n.53.

5 Athanasios, *VA*, 3 (SC 400.134–36): Ἦν τοίνυν ἐν τῇ πλησίον κώμῃ τότε γέρων, ἐκ νεότητος τὸν μονήρη βίον ἀσχήσας

6 It is perhaps in Jerome that we first find the idea that Antony was claimed as the first monk, for in his *Vita Pauli* Jerome contests this claim and puts forward the—largely fictional—Paul as the true candidate for the title.



leading role.<sup>7</sup> Gregory of Nyssa's *Dialogus de anima et resurrectione*, and his life of his sister, gives us a picture of the role open to a determined woman within the bosom of an ascetic Christian family, interesting—and maybe, a little surprising—in itself, and probably important in fashioning Basil's understanding of the ascetic and monastic life. But secondly, the traditional literature on early monasticism sets it in the context of withdrawal—ἀποτάγη—from human society. If, for Athanasios, as he praises Antony's success, 'the desert became a city', he is conscious of the paradox he has uttered, for the monasticism of withdrawal meant withdrawal *from* human society. But such monasticism of withdrawal was not the only kind of monasticism to emerge, it is just that the sources for the ascetic communities that remained in the city are much less evident and much more difficult to interpret. However, after the research of such as David Brakke and Peter Hatlie, we can form a much better picture of city (or town) monasticism. Brakke has shown how much effort Athanasios devoted to fostering ascetic groups in the towns and villages of Egypt, alongside his better known attempt to secure the support of the desert monks,<sup>8</sup> while Hatlie has built up a picture—from an array of sources: hints in historians, canonical material, and evidence from hagiography—of the development of monasticism in the city of Constantinople, which, though scarcely typical, was far removed from the asceticism of the desert.<sup>9</sup> Basil became archbishop of Caesarea, and much of his later reflection on the monastic state concerned the group, or groups, of ascetics he established under his own authority in Caesarea of Cappadocia.

Basil, therefore, stands in a fascinatingly middle position: between the desert and the city, as I suggest in my title, but also between the emerging monastic movement of the fourth century and the unstructured asceticism that informed groups of virgins and widows, which seem, most often, to have had a family setting. He also occupies a position, not exactly in the middle, but at the confluence of two traditions that nurtured the tradition of Christian monasticism: the tradition of classical philosophy and that of the Christian scriptures—between, as it were, the philosophers and the prophets, between Plato and Moses, or Herakleitos and Isaiah. I think it can be argued that, in looking

7 On Macrina see Anna M. Silvas, *The Asketikon of St Basil the Great*, OECIS (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), esp. 60–83.

8 See especially David Brakke, *Athanasius and the Politics of Asceticism*, OECIS (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1995).

9 Peter Hatlie, *The Monks and Monasteries of Constantinople, c. 350–850* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007).

at Basil, it is possible to see more of the possibilities open to a Christian monk in the fourth century, than in looking at any one else in that century.

I want to take this further by looking at various places where Basil speaks of the monastic vocation and at some of the themes in these works. Let us start at what is very nearly the beginning of his literary career: his second letter, which he sent to his friend, Gregory of Nazianzus, in about 359. The date and the recipient of the letter are significant; Basil had a little earlier written to Gregory praising the physical setting of his retreat in Pontos, to which he invites his friend Gregory whom he had abandoned in Athens:

There is a high mountain, covered with a thick forest, watered on its northerly side by cool and transparent streams. At its base is outstretched an evenly sloping plain, ever enriched by the moisture from the mountain. A forest of many-coloured and multifarious trees, a spontaneous growth surrounding the place, acts almost as a hedge to enclose it, so that even Kalypso's isle, which Homer seems to have admired above all others for its beauty, is insignificant as compared to this.<sup>10</sup>

And so on. Gregory eventually overcame his scruples and joined Basil in Pontos; there, together, they compiled their tribute to Origen—*Philokalia*, an anthology of Origen's works. They were engaged in a joint intellectual quest, the pursuit of philosophy—φιλοσοφία, a term that was rapidly changing its connotation in the latter part of the fourth century to mean pursuit of the ascetic life.

But before Gregory joined Basil in Pontos, he had replied to Basil's letter and received a response, which is preserved in Basil's correspondence as the second letter. Gregory's response to Basil's account of the beauty of the place had been guarded; he had apparently said (Gregory's letter is lost) that he would rather learn something about Basil and his companions' "habits and mode of life" than the beauty of the place—he wants to know about their *τρόπος* rather than their *τόπος*. Basil, in his reply in what occurs in his correspondence as the second letter, commends Gregory for this, remarking that, though he could

10 Basil, *Ep.* 14.2 (Roy J. Deferrari, trans., *St Basil: Letters*, vol. 1, LCL [Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1926], 106–108): "Ὅρος γὰρ ἐστὶν ὑψηλὸν βαθεῖα ὕλη κεκαλυμμένον, ψυχροῖς ὕδασι καὶ διαφανέσιν εἰς τὸ κατ' ἄρκτον κατάρβυτον. τούτου ταῖς ὑπωρείας πεδῖον ὕπτιον ὑπεστώρεσται, ταῖς ἐκ τοῦ ὄρους νοτίσι διηνεκῶς πλαινώμενον. ὕλη δὲ τούτῳ αὐτομάτως περιφυεῖσα ποικίλων καὶ παντοδαπῶν δένδρων, μικροῦ δεῖν ἀντὶ ἔρκους αὐτῷ γίνεται, ὡς μικρὰν εἶναι πρὸς τοῦτο καὶ τὴν Καλυψοῦς νῆσον, ἣν δὴ πασῶν πλέον Ὀμηρος εἰς κάλλος θαυμάσας φαίνεται. English translation is from Deferrari.

leave behind his life in the city, he has “not yet been able to leave [him]self behind.”<sup>11</sup> What is needed is separation from the world altogether, but what this means is not so much bodily separation, as separation from sympathy, fellow feeling, with the body and its concerns, which include home, possessions, love of friends, social relations, and even knowledge derived from human teaching. To this end solitude (ἐρημία) is very valuable, as it calms the passions and affords the reason leisure (σχολή).<sup>12</sup> Basil goes on to speak of the purifying of the soul, when it is deprived in solitude of the constant distraction of civil and family life. The soul is enabled to relinquish this world and “to imitate on earth the anthems of angels’ choirs; to hasten to prayer at the very break of the day, and to worship our Creator with hymns and songs.”<sup>13</sup> The beginning of this purification of the soul is tranquillity (ἡσυχία), which enables the soul to withdraw into itself and by itself to ascend to contemplation of God. For this reading of and meditation on the scriptures is valuable, for they contain not just precepts to follow, but examples to imitate. Prayer is stimulated by reading the scriptures; it engenders in the soul a distinct conception of God, but more than that brings about the indwelling of God in the soul, for “the indwelling of God is this—to hold God ever in memory, His shrine established within us.”<sup>14</sup> There then follow reflections on the way of life that is conducive to this: reflections on the way we are to behave one towards another, with respect and courtesy, neither harsh towards others nor withdrawn; reflections on clothing, utilitarian, not ostentatious; food is to be simple and adequate, preceded and followed by prayer; sleep to be light.

There are several things that are striking about this. First of all, most of it could have been said by a pagan philosopher, talking about the higher life of thought: the emphasis on tranquillity, the sense of distance from the world ushering in proximity to heaven and heavenly beings; again, Basil’s account of appropriate dress for the Christian ascetic recalls the accounts of the cynic philosophers. But the classical style and allusions are shot through with language that is distinctively Christian. Patrucco’s fascinating commentary reveals, for example, that just after describing the Christian monk’s dress in terms of the cynic philosopher, to describe them as ‘mourners’, or ‘those who grieve’ (οἱ πενθοῦντες) is to employ a word that had become a technical term

11 Basil, *Ep.* 2.1 (Deferrari, *St Basil*, 1.8): ἑμαυτὸν δὲ οὐ πῶς ἀπολιπεῖν ἠδυνήθην.

12 Ibid., 2.2 (Deferrari, *St Basil*, 1.12).

13 Ibid.: τοῦ τὴν ἀγγέλων χορείαν ἐν γῆ μιμεῖσθαι.

14 Ibid., 2.3 (Deferrari, *St Basil*, 1.16): τοῦτό ἐστι Θεοῦ ἐνοίκησις, τὸ διὰ τῆς μνήμης ἐνιδρυμένον ἔχειν ἐν ἑαυτῷ τὸν Θεόν.

for an ascetic in the Syrian tradition.<sup>15</sup> A more obvious example occurs right at the beginning of the letter, when Basil agrees with Gregory that solitude on its own is useless, because our minds remain cluttered, and says that we need “to keep close to the footsteps of Him who pointed the way to salvation,” and goes on to quote Matthew 16:24. Basil, then, seems to stand, quite unselfconsciously at the interface between classical culture and the message of the gospel. But having said that, we must add: Basil is certainly facing in one direction—towards the scriptures; there is a kind of turning-point in the letter when he says, “But the best way to the discovery of what is needed is meditation on the Scriptures inspired by God.”<sup>16</sup> It has recently been argued that it was his elder sister Macrina who brought home to him the crowning significance of the scriptures.<sup>17</sup> Secondly, however, we find something else that is to become characteristic of Basil: viz., the way in which our relationships with one another become themselves an ascetic way. For Basil, though the ascetic way involves an inward transformation, it is something that involves others, something that is tested and furthered by our relationships with other people. In this letter it is very striking, for however much the language recalls the ideal of the ‘alone returning to the alone’, the letter closes with several pages concerned with how we are to live together, how we are to behave one towards another.

We need to underline that this ‘second’ letter is really quite early. Indeed, perhaps this would be a good moment to give a brief sketch of the sequence of events in Basil’s life. Basil was born in 329, the second son of devout parents, his elder sister Macrina being about two years older than him. When he was about seventeen, he went to Caesarea to a kind of higher school, and there he met one who was to be a lifelong friend, Gregory of Nazianzus. When he was twenty, he continued his studies in Constantinople, and shortly afterwards went to Athens, the “home of letters . . . a city truly of gold, and the patroness of all that is good,” as Gregory put it in his funeral oration for his friend.<sup>18</sup> After about six years there, in 356, Basil returned to Caesarea, and later on in that year, at the instigation of Macrina, was baptised and ordained reader. There followed in 357 his travels to monastic centres in pursuit of Eustathios, and at the end of that year he began to pursue the ascetic life at his family’s estate at Annisa on the river Iris, in Pontos. In 362, he was in Caesarea for the

15 See Patrucco, *Basilio di Cesare*, 1.272.

16 Basil, *Ep.* 2.3 (Deferrari, *St Basil*, 1.14): Μεγίστη δὲ ὁδὸς πρὸς τὴν τοῦ καθήκοντος εὕρεσιν καὶ ἡ μελέτη τῶν θεοπνεύστων Γραφῶν.

17 Silvas, *Asketikon*, 70.

18 Gregory of Nazianzus, *Or.* 43.14 (SC 384.146–48): τὸ τῶν λόγων ἔδαφος . . . τὰς χρυσᾶς ὄντως ἐμοὶ καὶ τῶν καλῶν προξένους εἶπερ τινί.

death of the bishop Dianios, and was ordained priest there. There follow eight years during which he spent much time in Pontos, as well as brief periods in Caesarea. In 370 he was elected bishop of Caesarea. He died on 1 January, 379.

That is a very skeletal account, but it brings out how his adult life is determined by two places: his family estate in Pontos, and the centre of his ecclesiastical activities, Caesarea in Cappadocia. In both places he was concerned with monastic communities: something like a rural retreat in Annisa, and a monastic community in Caesarea, that existed in the city and was under his authority. His monastic writings quickly became very important for the Greek East, with the consequence that what we have now—say, printed in Migne's *Patrologia Graeca*—is a collection of disparate material. The evolution of this material is something that has been clarified in the scholarship of the last century, especially by the labours of Dom Jean Gribomont. What we now have is called *Asceticon magnum*—the big collection of ascetic writings. This consists of the central core of the work, called *Regula fusius* and *Regula breuius*, together with a variety of small treatises, sermons and letters: all of this in Greek. There also exists a Latin translation, called *Regula Basilii*, translated by Rufinus into Latin. This latter has caused a good deal of puzzlement: it consists of a series of 'rules', such as are found in *Regula fusius* and *Regula breuius*, but in a different order and with no distinction between longer and shorter rules. It is now thought that it represents a translation of an earlier version of *Regula*, before they were divided up between the longer and the shorter. The translation, however, was—as is typical of Rufinus—pretty free, and does not give us direct access to the earlier version of *Asceticon*, known as *Asceticon paruum*.<sup>19</sup>

That all sounds very complicated—and it is!—but the important points to notice are these. First of all, Basil was concerned with two communities, one of which—that in Pontos—certainly had a life apart from him. That means that Basil himself stands within a tradition; he is very aware that in his reflections on monasticism he is introducing nothing new, but developing something already deeply rooted in the Christian community. Secondly, and closely related, it is easy to be misled by the term 'rule' and 'rules'. It is in fact doubtful if they occurred at all in the original Greek texts; only in the titles of the two sets of 'rules', and then not in all MSS, are they called ῥοι, definitions. The individual 'rules' are called Ἐρωτησεις (questions), followed by ἀποκρισεις (responses), the terms used by Anna Silvas in her recent translation; for the 'rules' are in fact questions and answers: longer answers to general questions, and shorter answers to more specific points. The longer responses, for example, begin by

19 For the details see Rousseau, *Basil*, 354–59, and modifying and correcting this account: Silvas, *Asketikon*.

discussing the twofold commandment to love, love of God, love of one's neighbour, fear of God, etc.

'Rules' occur in Basil's works, but elsewhere. He was bishop of Caesarea at a crucial point in the development of the church as an institution in the Roman empire, and in several of his letters to a friend, Amphilochios, who had been appointed bishop of Ikonion, he does produce what later came to be known as 'canons'—the 'rules' that constitute the legal framework within which the church operates.<sup>20</sup> It is interesting that the church came to call its legal enactments not laws, νόμοι, but κανόνες, 'rules'. Though this can be made too much of, there seems to be manifest in this avoidance of the use of the term νόμος a sensitivity to the fact that for Christians the 'law' is something found in the scriptures, something, in fact, identical with the gospel. There is something similar, it seems to me, in the fact that what the West translated as *regulae* are really much more in the nature of advice to questions asked by Christians keen to know how to live the gospel.

But to see St Basil as the author of what came to be called *Asceticon*, and also the source of the largest group of the 'canons of the fathers' (in contrast to the 'canons of the synods'), draws attention to something else of importance. They show Basil assuming responsibility both for the ordering of the church, of which the development of the body of the holy canons is an important aspect, and one that took its first steps in the years when Basil was archbishop of Caesarea, and also for the shaping of the monastic tradition. These two concerns overlap: synodical canons often deal with monks, but usually in an antagonistic way: monks were a problem for bishops; they needed to be controlled. With Basil it looks rather different; it was more a case of a spectrum of concern for the ordering of the church. At the core, in *Regula fusius* and *Regula breuius*, we see Basil concerned to foster the enthusiasm of those who desired to live out the gospel in a strenuously committed way. In the canons, we see Basil, for the most part, concerned with the problems caused by those whose way of life breaches the standards of the gospel—many of them are concerned with people whose sinful behaviour has come within the terms of the church's penitential system, and determine the *epitimia*, the ecclesiastical penalties (usually in terms of years of excommunication) required for such offences.

There is, then, with St Basil a sense of continuity between the monastic order and the church: they are not opposed, as many interpretations of the rise of the monastic movement suggest, which see the monks as continuing the rigorous ideals of the church of the martyrs, as the institutional church itself, led by bishops, more and more enters into compromises with the state. There

20 The bulk of the canons of St Basil are drawn from *Epp.* 188, 199, 217, and 236 to Amphilochios.

is another sign of this sense of continuity: Basil has no terminology for ‘monks’. *Epistula* 22 has a, doubtless editorial, heading, giving its subject as: ‘On the perfection of the life of monks’ (Περὶ τελειότητος βίου μοναχῶν); but the letter itself never mentions monks, μοναχοί, it speaks simply of ‘Christians’, Χριστιανοί. This is true of the rest of his ‘monastic’—or, perhaps better, ascetic—writings, including *Regula fusius* and *Regula breuius*: they are addressed to those he calls Christians, not to ‘monks’. This is partly owing to the fact that Basil’s works are so early: terminology for monks had not yet developed. And though it is clear that Basil is not simply addressing all Christians—for one thing, he is clearly addressing those who have adopted the single life; he does not envisage among the Christians he is addressing men and women, married with families—nonetheless, he has no separate ideal to put before his ascetics: the Christian life is, for all, even the most rigorous ascetic, simply a living out of the commitments entered into at baptism.

This lack of a sense of a clearly defined ‘monastic’ structure, different from that of ordinary Christians, is, I think, manifest in other ways. For example: the structure of the community itself. Basil certainly envisages a community; he is an advocate of cœnobitic asceticism, based on the common life, in Greek, κοινὸς βίος. But there is little evidence of the kind of clearly defined, and often rather authoritarian, structures that are frequently found in cœnobitic monasticism (not least in the roughly contemporary cœnobitic monasticism of Pachomios in Egypt). There is no evidence of an abbot, from whom all authority stems. Rather Basil refers to ‘those who preside’, who seem to be a group, both of men and women, who are more experienced and thus able to help those seeking to join the community, or in the early stages of their ascetic life. It is striking, too, that Basil envisages a community of men and women—the two *tagmata*, as he calls them. He is aware of the potential problems, but seeks to deal with it by removing occasions of temptation: individual encounters are not allowed, but there are occasions when men may learn from women, and women from men (*Regula fusius* 33). In the question-and-answer on authority and obedience, it is a question of obedience to the community as a whole—undertaking a task, not because one fancies it, but because it is needed, balanced by the fact that someone who is good at something should not abandon it, if it is something the community needs; such decisions seem to be left to the community as a whole, not consigned to an individual (*Regula fusius* 41). One of the shorter responses concerns the spirit of humility with which we should accept a service from one’s brother. The brief response runs thus: “As a slave from his Lord, such as the apostle Peter showed when the Lord served him. From this we also learn the danger of those who do not welcome this service.” (*Regula breuius* 161). That last sentence is very interesting: members of the community need to



be able to *receive*, and not just to give. This is perhaps even more telling than Basil's memorably tart response to those who exalt the solitary life: "Whose feet then will you wash?" (*Regula fusius* 7).

What is even more striking about that *response* on the solitary life is the whole tenor of Basil's words here. Running through that response are echoes of the apostle Paul's language about the church as a body with many members, all of which contribute one to another. It is against that background that Basil draws out his objections to the solitary life. Love 'seeks not its own'; but if you are on your own, it is difficult to flesh that out. We need other people to draw out attention to our failings; we are not good at noticing them ourselves. What about love of our neighbour—feeding the hungry, clothing the naked? How do we test our humility? But the imagery of the body of Christ comes into its own as Basil makes clear that the church is the place of the charisms of God, the place where the gifts of the Spirit are received. No one person receives all the gifts of the Spirit, but we all can benefit from them. This sense of the church or the monastic community as the place where the gifts of the Spirit are poured out—apostolic in that striking sense of the word—is enormously important for St Basil: important both for his sense of the church and his understanding of the monastic community. As Spirit-filled, and dispensing the gifts of the Spirit, the community of ascetics perhaps finds its fulfilment most naturally—not in the desert, nor in rural retreat—but in the city, where such a community can minister to the needs of humanity. Basil certainly envisaged his community of ascetics as including those with the gift of healing, and not just some remarkable charismatic gift, but those who had been trained in medicine and the ways of healing.

We seem to have come a long way from where we started, in *Epistula* 2, with Basil extolling the virtues of ἐρημία and ἡσυχία, solitude and tranquillity, which he had found in the peace and beauty of his rural retreat in Annisa, on the banks of the Iris, in Pontos. I do not, however, think this is a chronological journey: from his youthful enthusiasm as he sought a life of solitude to his mature appreciation, as a bishop, of the spirit-filled life in common. Rather, I would see it as a recognition of the two poles of St Basil's thought: the pole that sees the desert as an ideal, and the other pole that realises the richness of a life in community, in the city. I do not think Basil denies either pole; it is rather the case that if we are to serve others—within and beyond the community—there will be needed in each of us the kind of inner quiet that he extolled in his letter to Gregory; while, on the other hand, the kind of independence of the cares of the world, distracting us from God, that he also extolled in that letter, is grounded in a selflessness, that comes about as our sharp edges, as it were, are smoothed away by the demands of living in community with others.



What remains constant is his conviction that none of this is achieved simply by asceticism. Where in the second letter he had spoken of the necessity of receiving in one's heart "impressions brought about by divine instruction," for which the 'greatest path' is "meditation on the divinely-inspired scriptures,"<sup>21</sup> in his *Regula fusius* and *Regula breuius* he speaks of the gifts of the Spirit that the community as a whole, the church, receives.

The importance of the Holy Spirit for St Basil hardly needs mentioning; one of his greatest works was his treatise *De Spiritu sancto*, written in the last decade of his life. Too much scholarly attention has been paid to his refusal publicly to use the term *homoousios* of the Spirit, and too little to the manifold ways in which the Holy Spirit informs his theology. To pursue that very far here would be to digress completely from the subject of this chapter. What I want to do is point out how his approach to the doctrine of the Spirit is closely linked with his understanding of the spiritual life, and therefore of the monastic life.

There is a famous passage in *De Spiritu sancto*, in which he talks about what is meant by coming to know the Spirit, or more precisely coming to be assimilated to the Spirit. He says (I abbreviate occasionally):

The soul's assimilation to the Spirit is not a matter of spatial approach . . . but is separation from the passions, which, through love of the body, gain entry to the soul and estrange it from closeness to God. Purified, therefore, from ugliness that has accrued through vice, and returning to its natural beauty, and as it were through purity being restored to the ancient form after the royal image: this is the sole means of drawing close to the Paraclete. He, like the sun beheld by a pure eye, shows to you, in himself, the image of the invisible. In the blessed vision of the image, you see the ineffable beauty of the archetype. Through Him, hearts are raised up, the infirm are led by the hand, those making progress find perfection. This One, shining in those who are purified from every stain, renders them spiritual by communion with Him. And just as bodies made radiant and diaphanous, when the ray falls on them, themselves become brilliant, and shine with a radiance other than their own, so the spirit-bearing souls, illumined by the Spirit, are themselves rendered spiritual and pass on grace to others. Thence come: foreknowledge of future things, understanding of mysteries, comprehension of hidden things, distribution of charisms, a heavenly way of life, dancing with the angels, unending joy,

---

21 Basil, *Ep.* 2.3. See n.16 above.

dwelling in God, assimilation to God, and the pinnacle of our longings—to become God.<sup>22</sup>

Let us focus on a few points. First, separation from the passions—where Basil begins with his characterisation of the contemplative life in *Epistula 2*—is tantamount to assimilation to the Spirit. But this means, too, restoration to the ‘ancient form’, the ‘royal image’, our state in accordance with the image of God (κατ’ εἰκόνα τοῦ Θεοῦ) for which God intended us. But the thrust of the passage is not to look back, nostalgically, to paradise, but to look forward: to the future transfiguration in the Spirit. Note, too, the way in which Basil emphasises that assimilation to the Spirit means that we become sources of illumination for others. The passage ends with a list of eschatological blessings: the fulfilment of prophecy, entry into the mystery of God, showering with the gifts of the Spirit, dancing with the angels, and immersion in God: becoming God, deification, θέωσις, to use the word first used frequently (and maybe coined) by his friend, St Gregory the Theologian.

The eschatological tenor is very striking, but there are also, it seems to me, liturgical echoes, especially ‘the raising up of hearts’, καρδιῶν ἀνάβασις, which recalls the *sursum corda* (Ἄνω τὰς καρδίας) of the divine liturgy. Together, they suggest what I would like to call an ‘epikletic’ understanding of the Christian life, and of the monastic life: both are conceived as lives lived through invocation, *epiklesis*, of the Holy Spirit. I need hardly tell you that in the Liturgy of St Basil, the *epiklesis* of the Holy Spirit is the culmination of the *anamnesis*, the recalling and representation of the mystery of Christ. In the Liturgy of St Basil (in this no different from the other regularly used liturgy in the Orthodox church, that

22 Basil, *De Spir. sanct.* 9.23 (SC 17bis.326–28): Οἰκειώσις δὲ Πνεύματος πρὸς ψυχὴν οὐχ ὁ διὰ τόπου προσεγγισμός . . . ἀλλ’ ὁ χωρισμός τῶν παθῶν ἄπερ ἀπὸ τῆς πρὸς τὴν σάρκα φιλίας ὑστερον ἐπιγινόμενα τῇ ψυχῇ, τῆς ἀπὸ τοῦ Θεοῦ οἰκειότητος ἡλλοτριώσε. Καθαρθέντα δὴ οὖν ἀπὸ τοῦ αἵσχους ὁ ἀνεμάξατο διὰ τῆς κακίας, καὶ πρὸς τὸ ἐκ φύσεως κάλλος ἐπανελθόντα, καὶ οἷον εἰκόνι βασιλικῇ τὴν ἀρχαίαν μορφήν διὰ καθαρότητος ἀποδόντα, οὕτως ἐστὶ μόνως προσεγγίσει τῷ Παρακλητῆ. Ὁ δὲ, ὡσπερ ἥλιος, κεκαθαρμένον ὄμμα παραλαβών, δείξει σοι ἐν ἑαυτῷ τὴν εἰκόνα τοῦ ἀοράτου. Ἐν δὲ τῷ μακαρίῳ τῆς εἰκόνος θεάματι τὸ ἄρρητον ὄψει τοῦ ἀρχετύπου κάλλος. Διὰ τούτου, καρδιῶν ἀνάβασις, χειραγωγία τῶν ἀσθενοῦντων, τῶν προκοπτόντων τελειώσις. Τοῦτο τοῖς ἀπὸ πάσης κηλίδος κεκαθαρμένοις ἐλλάμπον, τῇ πρὸς ἑαυτὸ κοινωνία πνευματικῶς ἀποδείκνυσι. Καὶ ὡσπερ τὰ λαμπρὰ καὶ διαφανῆ τῶν σωμάτων, ἀκτίνος αὐτοῖς ἐμπεσοῦσας, αὐτὰ τε γίνεταί περιλαμπῆ, καὶ ἑτέραν αὐγὴν ἀφ’ ἑαυτῶν ἀποστίλβει· οὕτως αἱ πνευματοφόροι ψυχαὶ ἐλλαμφθεῖσαι παρὰ τοῦ Πνεύματος, αὐταὶ τε ἀποτελοῦνται πνευματικαὶ καὶ εἰς ἑτέρους τὴν χάριν ἐξαποστέλλουσιν. Ἐντεῦθεν, μελλόντων πρόγνωσις, μυστηρίων σύνεσις, κεκρυμμένων κατάληψις, χαρισμάτων διανομαί, τὸ οὐράνιον πολίτευμα, ἡ μετὰ ἀγγέλων χορεία, ἡ ἀτελεΐτητος εὐφροσύνη, ἡ ἐν Θεῷ διαμονή, ἡ πρὸς θεὸν ὁμοίωσις, τὸ ἀκρότατον τῶν ὀρεκτῶν, θεὸν γενέσθαι.

ascribed to St John Chrysostom), the Holy Spirit is invoked to come upon—not just, or even first, the bread and the wine—but also ἐφ’ ἡμᾶς, upon us, and for this purpose: “that we all, partaking in the one bread and the cup, may be united one with another in the communion of the one Holy Spirit.” The Holy Spirit is invoked to come upon us and the gifts of bread and wine, and make us and them the body and blood of Christ, “poured out for the life and salvation of the world.”

It takes place for others: the key point that underlies Basil’s conviction of the perfection of the cœnobitic life. But that cœnobitic life needs to have at its heart the silence in which the Word and Spirit of God can come. Silence—in this case σιωπή, rather than ἡσυχία, tranquillity—has an important role in the argument of the treatise *De Spiritu sancto*. You will recall that St Basil invokes a distinction between the public proclamation, κήρυγμα, and the teaching, the δόγμα, of mysteries preserved in silence. He gives the obscurity of the scriptures as an example of a ‘form of silence’, but most of his examples are liturgical: prayer facing East and standing upright, the *epiklesis* itself, and other liturgical practices. But the way he introduces these liturgical actions, or gestures, that speak of mysterious dogmas is worth noting:

For this reason we all look towards the East in our prayers, though there are few who know that it is because we are in search of our ancient fatherland, Paradise, which God planted towards the East. We fulfil our prayers standing upright on the first day of the week, but not all know the reason for this.<sup>23</sup>

The liturgical actions that we perform are not expressive gestures that we entirely understand, they are traditional gestures, accepted by us as we become part of the Christian community. They are *essentially* a matter of community; as individual gestures we do not necessarily, and perhaps never will fully, understand them. Also: they take up one aspect of what I have called ‘epikletic’, the sense of invoking the Spirit, while we stand on the threshold of eternity. St Basil continues, in the passage just quoted, to unfold the meaning of these liturgical acts: praying facing East, and praying standing (on Sundays and during the Paschal season), and this unfolding is full of eschatological echoes: we are looking towards τὴν ἄπαυστον ἡμέρα, τὴν ἀνέσπερον, τὴν ἀδιαδόχον, τὸν

23 Ibid., 66 (SC 17bis.484): Τοῦτο χάριν πάντες μὲν ὁρῶμεν κατ’ ἀνατολὰς ἐπὶ τῶν προσευχῶν· ὀλίγοι δὲ ἴσμεν ὅτι τὴν ἀρχαίαν ἐπιζητοῦμεν πατρίδα, τὸν παράδεισον, ὃν ἐφύτευσεν ὁ Θεὸς ἐν Ἑδέμ κατ’ ἀνατολὰς. Ὁρθοὶ μὲν πληροῦμεν τὰς εὐχὰς ἐν τῇ μιᾷ τοῦ σαββάτου· τὸν δὲ λόγον οὐ πάντες οἶδαμεν.

ἀλῆκτον ἐκεῖνον καὶ ἀγήρω αἰῶνα—“the day without end, knowing neither evening nor tomorrow, that imperishable age that will never grow old;” “The whole of Pentecost recalls the resurrection that awaits us in eternity.”

‘Between the desert and the city’: St Basil’s quest was literally that, inspired both by the solitude of the desert and the needs of the city, with the result that, in his reflection on the monastic, or ascetic, life, as I have already suggested, we gain a much better sense of the variety of ways in which the call of what was to be called the monastic life could be pursued. But whatever way one follows, for Basil we cannot forget the different ways others follow, for they all complement one another within the spirit-filled and spirit-bearing body of Christ, which is the church. But my final reflections, venturing beyond the actual ascetic texts Basil has bequeathed to us, suggest that it is in the divine liturgy, to the rites of which Basil contributed so much, that we find how all these strands are woven together in an understanding of the church as embracing a multitude of different people, who together stand imploring the coming of the Spirit and the fulfilment of God’s promises.

### Bibliography

- Athanasios. *Vita Antonii* (G.J.M. Bartelink, *Athanasie d’Alexandrie. Vie d’Antoine*, SC, vol. 400. Paris: Les Éditions du Cerf, 1994).
- Basil. *Epistulae* (English translation in Roy J. Deffarari, *St Basil: The Letters*, 4 vols, LCL. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1926–1934).
- . *De Spiritu sancto* (Benoît Prouche, ed., SC, vol. 17bis. Paris: Éditions du Cerf, 2002).
- Gregory of Nazianzus. *Orationes* (Jean Bernardi, Marie-Ange Calvert-Sebasti, Claudio Moreschini, Justin Mossay, and Paul Gallay, eds, *Grégoire de Nazianze. Discours*, SC, vols 247, 309, 405, 270, 284, 250, 318, 358, and 384. Paris: Les Éditions du Cerf, 1978–1995).
- Brakke, David. *Athanasius and the Politics of Asceticism*, OECTS. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1995.
- Chitty, Derwas J. *The Desert a City*. Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1966.
- Harmless, William. *Desert Christians: An Introduction to the Literature of Early Monasticism*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004.
- Rousseau, Philip. *Basil of Caesarea*, TCH, vol. 20. Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1994.
- Silvas, Anna M. *The Asketikon of St Basil the Great*, OECTS. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005.

# The Likeness to God and the Imitation of Christ: The Transformation of the Platonic Tradition in Gregory of Nyssa

*Shigeki Tsuchihashi*

The Platonic tradition, which regards the perfection of human nature as ‘becoming like God’ or ‘likeness to God’ (ὁμοίωσις θεῶ),<sup>1</sup> deeply influenced not only the Hellenistic philosophers but also the Greek church fathers. Expressed in the ‘allegory of the cave’, which is another aspect of the tradition, it speaks of human beings attaining this exalted status by ascending from the underground cave to the world above ground filled with sunlight; in other words, from the illusory world of the senses, so full of misdeeds, to the real world of intelligible Ideas. In his *Theaetetus* (176a–b) and *Phaedo* (69b–c), in particular, Plato recognises that the purification (κάθαρσις) of the soul in ‘becoming like God’ is consonant with the flight from the world, which is symbolised as a cave. At the same time, Plato’s belief that the ‘practice of virtue’ makes it possible for a human being to become like God has an extremely important meaning. What kind of virtue makes it possible? Moreover, what does the idea of ‘return to the cave’ mean for the soul that has been purified by an escape from the cave and has become like God? Such questions must have arisen for Platonists, and later writers, both Christian and non-Christian. However, as Anthony Meredith argues in his distinguished article,<sup>2</sup> the tide of the Platonic tradition was obviously turned by Gregory of Nyssa’s reshaping of the cave allegory.

1 The term ‘likeness’ (ὁμοίωσις), of which the corresponding verb is ‘to become like’ (ὁμοιοῦσθαι, ἀφομοιοῦσθαι), has its well-known synonyms, for example, in ‘imitation’ (μίμησις, verb μιμεῖσθαι) and ‘image’ (εἰκῶν). Therefore, the phrase ‘becoming like God’ or ‘likeness to God’ (ὁμοίωσις θεῶ, ὁμοίωσις πρὸς θεόν) also has various similar expressions. At the same time, we need to pay attention to the subtle difference between ὁμοίωσις θεῶ and related expressions, such as ‘becoming God’ (θεὸν γενέσθαι), ‘participation in God’ (μεθεουσία θεοῦ), and ‘deification’ or ‘making God’ (θέωσις). For a comprehensive study of ὁμοίωσις θεῶ see Hubert Merki, *OMOIOΣΙΣ ΘΕΩ: Von der Platonischen Angleichung an Gott zur Gottähnlichkeit bei Gregor von Nyssa* (Freiburg: Paulusdruckerei, 1952).

2 Anthony Meredith, “Plato’s ‘Cave’ (*Republic* vii 514a–517e) in Origen, Plotinus, and Gregory of Nyssa,” in *Studia Patristica* vol. 27, ed. Elizabeth A. Livingstone, papers presented at the 11th International Conference on Patristic Studies, Oxford 1991 (Leuven: Peeters, 1993), 49–61.

In this essay I wish to clarify the shift in the Platonic cave allegory tradition from the viewpoint of ‘becoming like God’, about which Meredith hardly speaks, at least in his above-mentioned article.<sup>3</sup> In the first section I consider how the idea of ‘becoming like God’ or ‘likeness to God’ in the cave allegory was argued in the context of moral purification and the restoration of human nature, by referring to Philo, Origen, Plotinus, and Basil. According to Meredith, the meaning of the cave allegory is reinterpreted innovatively by Gregory of Nyssa, who places it in a soteriological context by emphasising the importance of the ‘incarnation’. Therefore, in the second section, I examine Gregory’s reinterpretation of the cave allegory as ‘the descent of the sun into the cave’, comparing it with Origen’s elucidation. Finally, in the third section, I refer to the idea mentioned by Gregory in *De beatitudinibus*, that human beings can ‘become like God’ by imitating the virtue of the incarnated Christ’s ‘modesty’ (ταπεινοφροσύνη). I then show that this Christian reshaping of Platonic tradition is added to the notion of a ‘virtuous assimilation to God’. Thus, it focuses on the Christian dogmas of the incarnation and resurrection of Christ, especially the spiritual restoration of the union of soul and body after death, and not the release from the body. Seen in this light, I conclude that Gregory of Nyssa essentially modifies or reinterprets the Platonic notion of ‘becoming like God’ and the allegory of the cave.

## 1 Ascent from the Cave and Becoming Like God

### 1.1 *The Tradition of the Cave Allegory*

There are several interpretations of the cave allegory of *Respublica* 7. First, some thinkers regard the cave as a symbol of this whole world. In *On the Descent of the Soul into Bodies*, Plotinus, for instance, writes, “it seems to me that Plato’s cave represents this whole world, as Empedocles’ den.”<sup>4</sup> In his discussion of Homer’s ‘cave of the nymphs’, Porphyry also insists that “Pythagoreans and,

3 In his other articles, naturally, Meredith argues about the theme of ὁμοίωσις θεῶ. For example, see his “Gregory of Nyssa, *De beatitudinibus*, Oratio 1: ‘Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven’ (Mt 5,3),” in *Gregory of Nyssa: Homilies on the Beatitudes. An English Version with Commentary and Supporting Studies. Proceedings of the Eighth International Colloquium on Gregory of Nyssa (Paderborn, 14–18 September 1998)*, ed. Hubertus R. Drobner and Albert Viciano, VCSupp, vol. 52 (Leiden: Brill, 2000), 93–109. As far as I know, however, there do not seem to be any articles in which Gregory’s reshaping of the allegory of the cave is explored from the viewpoint of ὁμοίωσις θεῶ.

4 Plotinus, *Enn.* 4.8.1.33–35: καὶ τὸ σπήλαιον αὐτῶ, ὡσπερ Ἐμπεδοκλεῖ τὸ ἄντρον. English translation is my own unless otherwise noted.

after them, Plato described this world as a rocky cavern or a cave.”<sup>5</sup> These interpretations thus see the ‘cave’ in *Respublica* and those of Homer and Empedocles as playing common symbolic roles. Plotinus, in particular, notes the state of human beings living in a cave by referring to Plato’s dialogues other than *Respublica*. He writes, “Plato despises every sensory thing in every scene, and denounces the mixing of soul and body. He also states that a soul is in bondage [see *Phaedo* 67d1] and buried in a body [see *Cratylus* 400c2]. He also places importance on the esoteric doctrine, saying that a soul is in a prison [see *Phaedo* 62b2–5].”<sup>6</sup> In other words, in the body, the soul is in bondage, in a grave or a prison, and has lost its wings (see *Phaedrus* 246c2 and 248c9). For this reason, human beings are in a fallen state, one that is compared with a cave.<sup>7</sup> To this extent, Plotinus assumes that the ‘cave’ of Empedocles, who refers to a soul fallen into the world because of its sin, and the ‘cave’ of Plato accord with each other.

Next, I examine the ascending process, one in which human beings progress from regarding only the shadows on the cave wall as truth to perceiving the figures causing them, and moreover to contemplating the latter’s true existence as the paradigmatic Ideas. This process implies the ‘conversion’ (περιαγωγή) of the whole soul from the changeable sensible realm to the eternal intelligible realm. In the allegory of the cave, this contrast becomes sharper in the ascent (ἀνοδος) from the obscure underground cave to the world above ground, which is filled with light. This dualistic composition, the cave underground and the sun outside, or darkness and brightness, seems to lead to a pessimistic conclusion about the soul. Thus, without release from the cave, it is impossible for the prisoners to attain salvation, the contemplation of true existence in the intelligible world. For the sun, or the Idea of the Good, exists only outside the cave. Plotinus clearly indicates this point, and says that the human soul suffers all kinds of evils in the world, which is compared to the cave.<sup>8</sup> According to Plato

5 Porphyry, *De ant. nymph.* 8: οἱ Πυθαγόρειοι καὶ μετὰ τούτους Πλάτων ἄντρον καὶ σπήλαιον τὸν κόσμον ἀπεφίησαν. In 7 he argues that ‘the cave of the nymphs’ of Homer is also “the symbol of this perceptible created world” (κόσμου σύμβολον [ἦτοι γεννητοῦ] αἰσθητοῦ τὸ ἄντρον ἐπιούνητο). According to him, “theologians thought that the cave was the symbol of this world and various worldly powers there” (σύμβολον κόσμου τὰ ἄντρα καὶ τῶν ἐγκοσμίων δυνάμεων ἐτίθεντο οἱ θεολόγοι) at that time (9). English translation in Thomas Taylor, *Select Works of Porphyry* (London: Thomas Rodd, 1823).

6 Plotinus, *Enn.* 4.8.1.28–33: ἀλλὰ τὸ αἰσθητὸν πᾶν πανταχοῦ ἀτιμάσας καὶ τὴν πρὸς τὸ σῶμα κοινωνίαν τῆς ψυχῆς μεμψάμενος ἐν δεσμῷ τε εἶναι καὶ τεθάφθαι ἐν αὐτῷ τὴν ψυχὴν λέγει, καὶ τὸν ἐν ἀπορρήτοις λεγόμενον λόγον μέγαν εἶναι, ὃς ἐν φρουρᾷ τὴν ψυχὴν φησιν εἶναι’.

7 *Ibid.*, 4.8.1.36–37.

8 *Ibid.*, 4.8.3.1–5.



and the Platonists, the soul, in escaping from the cave, which is contaminated with evil, and casting off its body, which is soiled with desire, ascends to the ideal world, which involves its 'becoming like God'.

## 1.2 *Becoming Like God as Escape from the World (= Ascent from the Cave)*

For Plato, 'being made like to God' means "escape from evils in this world" and "to become righteous and holy with the help of wisdom (φρόνησις)."<sup>9</sup> In the words of the allegory of the cave, "to make himself as much like a God as a human being can by the practice of virtue"<sup>10</sup> means to ascend from the cave, to contemplate "the things that are organised and always the same"<sup>11</sup> and to "imitate them and try to become as like them as he can."<sup>12</sup> The interpretation of these phrases has engendered many arguments about whether the practice of virtue to become like God implies the practice of 'civic' virtue in this world or the 'purification' of one from worldly evils in order to contemplate the Ideas, that is, the practice of 'cathartic' virtue. We cannot be sure of Plato's awareness of this difference. However, the Middle Platonists, such as Alcinous, were not conscious of it and believed that a coherent idea in Plato's philosophy integrated various passages in his texts.<sup>13</sup>

However, this difference was very important for Plotinus, who examined the theme of Plato's 'becoming like God'. In above-mentioned *Ennead* 1.2, which begins with quotations from Plato's *Theaetetus* (176a–b), Plotinus asks himself by which virtue we become like God and answers:

Plato, when he speaks of 'likeness' as a 'flight to God' from existence here below, and does not call the virtues which come into play in civic life just 'virtues,' but adds the qualification 'civic,' and elsewhere calls all the

9 Plato, *Theaet.* 176a–b: ἐνθένδε ἐκείσε φεύγειν . . . δίκαιον καὶ ὀσιον μετὰ φρονήσεως γενέσθαι. English translation is my own.

10 Plato, *Resp.* 10.12 613a8–b1: καὶ ἐπιτηδεύων ἀρετὴν εἰς ὅσον δυνατὸν ἀνθρώπῳ ὁμοιοῦσθαι θεῶ. English translation is my own.

11 *Ibid.*, 6.13 500c3–4: τεταγμένα ἅττα καὶ κατὰ ταῦτὰ ἀεὶ.

12 *Ibid.*, 500c6: μιμῆσθαι τε καὶ ὅτι μάλιστα ἀφομοιοῦσθαι. Although the phrase ὁμοίωσις θεῶ does not occur in this passage at all, it cannot be doubted that the theme there is 'becoming like God'. On Adam's reference to *Tim.* 47b–c concerning τεταγμένα ἅττα and Cherniss' comment that Plato never calls the Ideas 'gods' see David T. Runia, "The Theme of 'Becoming like God' in Plato's *Republic*," in *Dialogues on Plato's Politeia (Republic)*, ed. N. Notomi and L. Brisson (Sankt Augustin: Akademie Verlag, 2013), 289–90.

13 See Alcinous, *Didas.* 28. There are useful commentaries on this chapter in J. Dillon, trans., *Alcinous: The Handbook of Platonism* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1993), 171–76.



virtues ‘purifications’, makes clear that he postulates two kinds of virtues and does not regard the civic ones as producing likeness.<sup>14</sup>

He, however, insists that even cathartic virtue is not worthy of the divine (νοῦς or τὸ ἔν), and it is only useful as the means for the soul to ascend to the intelligible realm. Cathartic virtue, for Plotinus, is just a necessary measure for escaping the body, throwing all earthly concerns away and ascending from the cave to higher principles. Therefore, once reaching the higher realm, we abandon such virtues and choose a ‘self-centred and other-worldly’ life rather than the moral communitarian existence of this world.<sup>15</sup> “For it is to gods, not to good men, that we are to be made like.”<sup>16</sup>

This Platonist principle of purification and ascension as the means to reach God was transmitted through Origen to the Cappadocian writers. For example, Basil argues that it is important for us to become as much like God as possible; he states this principle in *De Spiritu sancto*:

Only when a man has been cleansed from the shame of his evil, and has returned to his natural beauty, and the original form of the Royal Image has been restored in him, is it possible for him to approach the Paraclete. Then, like the sun, He will show you in Himself the image of the invisible, and with purified eyes you will see in this blessed image the unspeakable beauty of its prototype . . . So too Spirit-bearing souls, illuminated by Him, finally become spiritual themselves, and their grace is sent forth to others. From this comes knowledge of the future . . . becoming like God, and, the highest of all desires, becoming God.<sup>17</sup>

14 Plotinus, *Enn.* 1.2.3. 6–10: Λέγων δὴ ὁ Πλάτων τὴν ὁμοίωσιν τὴν πρὸς τὸν θεὸν φυγὴν τῶν ἐντεῦθεν εἶναι, καὶ ταῖς ἀρεταῖς ταῖς ἐν πολιτείᾳ οὐ τὸ ἀπλῶς διδούς, ἀλλὰ προστιθεὶς πολιτικὰς γε, καὶ ἀλλαχοῦ καθάρσεις λέγων ἀπάσας δῆλός τε ἐστὶ διττὰς τιθεὶς καὶ τὴν ὁμοίωσιν οὐ κατὰ τὴν πολιτικὴν τιθεὶς. English translation in A.H. Armstrong, *Plotinus*, vol. 1, LCL (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1966).

15 On this characteristic of Plotinus’ ethical stance see John M. Dillon, “An Ethic for the Late Antique Sage,” in *The Cambridge Companion to Plotinus*, ed. L.P. Gerson (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 320.

16 Plotinus, *Enn.* 1.2.7.27–28: πρὸς γὰρ τούτους, οὐ πρὸς ἀνθρώπους ἀγαθοὺς ἢ ὁμοίωσις.

17 Basil, *De Spir. sanct.* 9.23 (SC 17bis.326–28): Καθαρθέντα δὴ οὖν ἀπὸ τοῦ αἵσχους ὁ ἀνεμάξατο διὰ τῆς κακίας, καὶ πρὸς τὸ ἐκ φύσεως κάλλος ἐπανελθόντα, καὶ ὡς εἰκόνα βασιλικῆ τὴν ἀρχαίαν μορφήν διὰ καθαρότητος ἀποδόντα, οὕτως ἐστὶ μόνως προσεγγίσει τῷ Παρακλήτῳ. Ὁ δέ, ὡς περ ἥλιος, κεκαθαυμένον ὄμμα παραλαβών, δείξει σοι ἐν ἑαυτῷ τὴν εἰκόνα τοῦ ἀοράτου. Ἐν δὲ τῷ μακαρίῳ τῆς εἰκόνας θεάματι τὸ ἄρητον ὄψει τοῦ ἀρχετύπου κάλλος. . . αἱ πνευματοφόροι ψυχαὶ ἐλλαμφθεῖσαι παρὰ τοῦ Πνεύματος, αὐταὶ τε ἀποτελοῦνται πνευματικαὶ καὶ εἰς ἐτέρους τὴν χάριν

### 1.3 *The Image of God and the Likeness of God*

The above quotation includes the themes of becoming like and of the image (εἰκῶν) of God. While the image of God “in its twofold acceptance—the image as the principle of God’s self-manifestation and the image as the foundation of a particular relationship of man to God”<sup>18</sup> primarily belongs to Christianity, as expressed in Hellenistic thought, it has been subject to various interpretations. Although I cannot refer to this complex discussion because of the limitation of space, I briefly consider the distinction between the image and the likeness of God, in connection with my main subject, ‘becoming like God’.

Philo Judaeus quotes Genesis 1:26,<sup>19</sup> slightly changing the Septuagint, “man was created after the image of God and after His likeness”<sup>20</sup> and notes the following:

images do not always correspond to their archetype and pattern, but are in many instances unlike it, the writer further brought out his meaning by adding ‘after the likeness’ to the words ‘after the image,’ thus showing that an accurate cast, bearing a clear impression, was intended.<sup>21</sup>

According to Philo, the human being in the sensible world is an image (copy) of the logos of God, or the image of God (archetype, paradigm), in the intelligible world. Therefore, the likeness can be regarded as the accurately imitated image of God. Moreover, in traditional exegesis, the image is distinguished from the

---

ἐξαποστέλλουσιν. Ἐντεῦθεν, μελλόντων πρόγνωσις, . . . ἢ πρὸς θεὸν ὁμοίωσις, τὸ ἀκρότατον τῶν ὀρεκτῶν, θεὸν γενέσθαι. English translation in David Anderson, *St. Basil the Great: On the Holy Spirit* (New York: St Vladimir’s Seminary Press, 1980), 44. Basil clearly distinguishes between θεὸν γενέσθαι and ὁμοούσιος θεῶ and denies the possibility of ὁμοούσιος θεῶ for human beings. See Basil, *Adv. Eunom.* 2.4 (SC 305.22).

18 Vladimir Lossky, *In the Image and Likeness of God* (New York: St Vladimir’s Seminary Press, 1974), 126.

19 Philo obviously follows Platonic tradition on the question of the τέλος, or purpose of life. For example, see his *De fug. et inu.* 63, where he actually regards ὁμοίωσις θεῶ as the τέλος of human life, quoting Plato, *Theaet.* 176a–b. Before Philo, however, the Jewish diaspora as per the authors of the deuterocanonical books already had adopted a Hellenic expression and a theology of the image in order to keep alive the religious literature of Judaism.

20 Philo, *De op.* 23.69: τὸν ἀνθρωπὸν φησι γεγενῆσθαι, κατ’ εἰκόνα θεοῦ καὶ καθ’ ὁμοίωσιν. On the other hand, the Septuagint version of Gen 1.26 reads: καὶ εἶπεν ὁ θεὸς ποιήσωμεν ἄνθρωπον κατ’ εἰκόνα ἡμετέραν καὶ καθ’ ὁμοίωσιν.

21 *Ibid.*, 23.71: ἐπεὶ δ’ οὐ σύμπασα εἰκῶν ἐμφορῆς ἀρχετύπῳ παραδείγματι, πολλὰ δ’ εἰσὶν ἀνόμοιοι, προσεπεσημῆνατο ἐπειπὼν τῷ καθ’ εἰκόνα τὸ καθ’ ὁμοίωσιν, εἰς ἔμφασιν ἀκριβοῦς ἐκμαγείου τρανὸν τύπον ἔχοντος. English translation in F.H. Colson and G.H. Whitaker, *Philo*, vol. 1, LCL (Cambridge Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1929).

likeness. Origen, for example, makes this difference clear by saying, “God only made man in the image of God, but not as yet in His likeness.”<sup>22</sup> In other words, it can be said that the possibility of the completion of human nature, given as the image of God, is realised as the perfect likeness of God, when human beings come to imitate God by receiving God’s grace. To the contrary, Gregory of Nyssa does not appear to observe the clear distinction between the image and the likeness. In fact, he uses the word ‘likeness’ as the natural endowment of a person, with the same meaning as natural image. This essay seeks to show that this transformation in the traditional interpretation is not random; rather, it is part of Gregory’s challenge, one in which he tries to reinterpret the Platonic ideas of the ‘cave allegory’ and ‘becoming like god’ in the Christian context.

## 2 Descent of the Sun into the Cave

In the preceding section I described how the Platonic ideal of becoming like God as an escape from the world (= ascent from the cave) was transmitted to later writers as moral purification and the recovery of human nature as the image of God. However, the issue of returning to the cave seems to have faded away. I consider this point in this section, in terms of the descent of God to the cave in the context of soteriology.

### 2.1 *Descent of God Identified as the Sun: Origen*

Origen shifts the emphasis from the cave to the sun. As a result, both the ascent of the human soul from the cave and the descent of the light from the sun become his principal subjects. Although Origen does not refer to the ‘cave’ directly, his motive is undoubtedly shown in the context of the sun as a representative symbol of God.<sup>23</sup> In Plato’s ‘cave allegory’, a person gradually becomes accustomed to strong light, moving closer to the fire illuminating the inside of the cave and the sunshine beyond it. For example, in *De principis* the sun is compared with God, and described as follows:

22 Origen, *Con. Cels.* 4.30 (SC 136.254): ἐποίησε δ’ ὁ θεὸς τὸν ἄνθρωπον «κατ’ εἰκόνα» θεοῦ ἀλλ’ οὐχὶ καὶ «καθ’ ὁμοίωσιν». English translation in H. Chadwick, *Origen: Contra Celsum*, rev. ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1965). On this traditional exegesis, moreover, see Origen, *De princ.* 3.6.1 (SC 268.234–38); and idem, *Comm. in Rom.* 4.5.11 (SC 539.248).

23 For Origen’s use of the allegory of the cave and his treatment of it see John M. Dillon, “The Knowledge of God in Origen,” in *Knowledge of God in the Graeco-Roman World*, ed. R. van den Broek, T. Baarda, and J. Mansfeld (Leiden: Brill, 1988), 219–28.

For if we see a man who can scarcely look at a glimmer or the light of the smallest lamp . . . and if we wish to teach him about the brightness and splendour of the sun, shall we not have to tell him that splendour of the sun is unspeakably and immeasurably better than all the light we can see? . . . But among all intelligent, that is, incorporeal beings, what is so superior to all others—so unspeakably and incalculably superior—is God.<sup>24</sup>

Origen insists that, however pure, our spirit, captive in the ‘prison’, that is the body, can never understand the divine nature. Although the Greek original version of his *De principiis* is mostly lost and is known largely through a Latin translation by Rufinus, Origen’s firm assertion about the impossibility of knowing the divine nature is clear. On this point he is far from Plato’s ‘cave allegory’, in which some people can end up contemplating the sun (that is, the Idea of the Good). According to Origen, since the sun itself (that is, the divine nature) can never be seen, it can only be deduced as the source of the shining light.<sup>25</sup>

Certainly, the Platonic motive for the ascent to the sun also has important meaning in Origen. However, the meaning of this ascent changes: Plato describes it in *Respublica* as a kind of compulsory educational programme; Plotinus refers to it as a possibility of self-developing the divine part in the soul; while in Origen it has a soteriological objective, the lifting up and redemption of the soul by the light descending from the sun. Here, the issue of the incarnation is a controversial addition: specifically, the incarnated Christ mediates between God, identified as the sun, and human beings. Celsus, a pagan philosopher in the latter half of the second century, insists that if the incarnation is the ‘descent of God’ to the human world, the immortal divine Logos (=Christ) is changed insofar as he has accepted a mortal human body and soul. Origen argues against him as follows: “While remaining unchanged in essence, He comes down in His providence and care over human affairs.”<sup>26</sup> In other words, the divine Logos descends “to the level of him who is unable to look

24 Origen, *De princ.* 1.1.5 (SC 252.98): “Sicut enim si uideamus aliquem uix posse scintillam luminis aut breuissimae lucernae lumen aspicere . . . si uelimus de claritate ac splendore solis edocere, nonne oportebit nos ei dicere quia omni hoc lumine quod uides ineffabiliter et inaestimabiliter melior ac praestantior solis est splendor? . . . Quid autem in omnibus intellectualibus, id est incorporeis, tam praestans omnibus, tam ineffabiliter atque inaestimabiliter praecellens quam deus?” English translation in George William Butterworth, *Origen: On First Principles* (London: SPCK, 1936).

25 Origen, *De princ.* 1.1.6 (SC 252.98).

26 Origen, *Con. Cels.* 4.14 (SC 136.216): Μένων γὰρ τῆ οὐσίᾳ ἀτρεπτος συγκαταβαίνει τῆ προνοίᾳ καὶ τῆ οἰκονομίᾳ τοῖς ἀνθρωπίνους πράγμασιν.

upon the radiance and brilliance of the Deity.<sup>27</sup> Afterwards, those who have accepted him are gradually lifted up by the Logos. On this point, Plato's motive, which is the gradual ascent to the sun, is inherited. However, the heart of the issue has already moved to the arguments about the Logos Christ, descending and incarnated for human redemption, but still remaining the everlasting and unknowable God. A similar argument can be seen in the Cappadocian writings. However, Basil refers to God's descent, compared to the light of the sun, as an activity not of Christ but of the Holy Spirit, bestowing life and grace to all creatures.<sup>28</sup> Here, we need to keep in mind the following point: neither Origen nor Basil argues that the sun itself (=the divine nature) changes and descends to the human world. Since the light of the sun is, so to speak, an image of the image of God, which is the likeness of God, it is not the image of God, much less the Divine nature. Going back to the 'allegory of the cave', the sun always exists outside of the cave and never descends to the cave. On this point, there is no disagreement in opinion from Plato to Origen. However, the situation changes drastically in the writings of Gregory of Nyssa.

## 2.2 *Descent of the Sun into the Cave: Gregory of Nyssa*

The issue of the incarnation was raised by Apollinarius of Laodicea in Syria in the latter half of the fourth century. He asked how it was possible that Christ could be both completely human and sinless at the same time.<sup>29</sup> According to Apollinarius, if Christ were totally human, he must have fallen into sin. In contrast, Gregory argues as follows:

For we say that being God by nature and therefore immaterial, invisible and without a body, yet at the end of the fullness of time, in his incarnational love for the human race, at a moment when evil had reached its highest point, then for the destruction of sin, he mixed with human nature, like *the sun coming to dwell in a gloomy cave*, and by its presence dissipating the darkness by means of the light.<sup>30</sup>

27 Ibid., 4.15 (SC 136.220): τῷ μὴ δυναμένῳ αὐτοῦ τὰς μαρμαρυγὰς καὶ τὴν λαμπρότητα τῆς θειότητος βλέπειν οἶονεἰ «σᾶρξ» γίνεται.

28 Basil, *De Spir. sanct.* 9.22 (SC 17bis.322–26).

29 J.H. Srawley, "St Gregory of Nyssa on the Sinlessness of Christ," *JTS* 7 (1906): 434–41, in a pioneering work, gives us a clear explanation of how Gregory of Nyssa argues against the view that Apollinarius intends to present an answer to this question, in other words, it explains how Gregory defends the sinlessness of Christ.

30 Gregory of Nyssa, *Anti. adu. Apoll.* (GNO 3/1.171) emphasis mine: ἡμεῖς γὰρ φαμεν, ὅτι ἄυλός τε καὶ ἀειδής καὶ ἀσώματος κατ' οὐσίαν θεός ὢν οἰκονομία τινὶ φιλανθρώπῳ πρὸς τῷ τέλει τῆς τοῦ παντός συμπληρώσεως ἦδη τῆς κακίας εἰς τὸ ἀκρότατον αὐξηθείσης, τότε ἐπὶ καθαίρει τῆς

Gregory consistently maintains against Apollinarius that the divine nature is never affected by sin, which is rooted in human nature, even if both are mixed. To this extent, there is little difference between him and Origen or others who insist on the immutability of the divine nature. However, in the case of Origen, the divine nature exists transcendently, like the sun shining at a height that can never be reached by human nature, being unknowable or imperceptible. The descent of God, for Origen, means the incarnation not of the divine nature but of the God's Logos, that is, Christ. It means, in other words, that the sun itself continues to stay at a height and a ray of light from it comes down to the cave. However, in the case of Gregory, God himself is mixed with human nature, meaning that the sun itself comes down to the cave and dwells there. Gregory emphasises this point not only in *Antirrheticus aduersus Apollinarium*, but also in *Encomium in s. Stephanum protomartyrem*, saying emphatically that “[God] came down to the cave for our sake.”<sup>31</sup>

Indeed, Gregory may have been the first and only thinker in the tradition of the ‘allegory of the cave’ who clearly expresses the motif of the sun itself coming down to the cave. However, this rewrite of the motif is not trivial. What does he intend to show by it? We find the answer to this question in *Antirrheticus aduersus Apollinarium*, immediately after the previously-quoted text. There, he refers to the phrase, “the light is shining in the dark” (John 1:5). As Meredith persuasively indicates, it is likely that Gregory does not try to apply the ‘allegory of the cave’ to christology by comparing God with the sun and sinful human beings with the cave. On the contrary, he seems to revise the ‘allegory of the cave’ with biblical words, with the sun as the light and the cave as the dark. In the words of Meredith, we could say that “Gregory wishes us to read *Republic* VII with the eyes of faith.”<sup>32</sup> If the relation between the cave and the sun is reinterpreted with the confidence (or belief) that the light eradicates and expels the dark, a soteriological motive would be very natural, according to which God partakes of human nature to expel human sin.<sup>33</sup> This must also

---

ἀμαρτίας τῇ ἀνθρωπίνῃ κατακρινῶνται φύσει, οἷόν τις ἥλιος ἐν γνοφῶδει σπηλαίῳ εἰσοικιζόμενος καὶ διὰ τοῦ φωτὸς ἐξαφανίζων τῇ παρουσίᾳ τὸ σκότος. English translation in Meredith, “Plato’s Cave,” 57.

31 Gregory of Nyssa, *Enc. in s. Steph. 1* (GNO 10/1.75): ἐκεῖνος τὸ τοῦ βίου σπήλαιον δι’ ἡμᾶς ὑπερχόμενος.

32 Meredith, “Plato’s Cave,” 58.

33 Originally, in Plato’s cave allegory, the philosopher, the ex-prisoner who has contemplated the Idea of the Good, comes down to the cave in order to bring an ideal national establishment and governance to the fellow beings in the cave. In Gregory’s soteriological framework, Plato’s allegory is rewritten as follows: the sun itself, which is comparable with the divine nature, comes down to the cave and brings redemption to the human being by

be Gregory's intention. Meredith shows its grounding in his interpretation of *Oratio catechetica* and *De uita Moysis*, which are Gregory's most mature writings. In both, Gregory's daring reshaping of the 'allegory of the cave' may be regarded as shifting the emphasis from the ascent out of the 'cave' and contemplation to the incarnation and the importance of virtue. This interpretation is extremely instructive and promising. However, in order to strengthen this assertion, it may be necessary to consider the terms of 'becoming like God', which is complementarily related to the 'allegory of the cave', for Meredith mentions hardly anything of it in his previously cited article. Such a consideration would reinforce certainly Gregory's daring reinterpretation, which reverses the traditional Platonic interpretation of the 'cave allegory'.

### 3 Imitation of Christ

#### 3.1 *From Imitation of God to Imitation of Christ*

As mentioned above, in traditional exegesis after Origen, the image of God is distinguished from the likeness of God. Moreover, unlike Jesus, human beings cannot be the image of God; rather, they are regarded as 'made after the image of God', that is, an image of the image. The interpretation of Gregory of Nyssa, however, deviates from this tradition. I have mentioned that Gregory regards the likeness as the natural image.<sup>34</sup> This is, however, not all of his challenge to traditional exegesis. In his interpretation of Paul's characterisation of Christ as "the image of the invisible God" (Col 1:15), Gregory applies the term 'image' not to Christ's divine nature but to his humanity.<sup>35</sup> What does he mean? To solve this question, we must first turn our attention to the shift of emphasis, from the likeness to God to the likeness to Christ, in the first homily of *De beatitudinibus*.

---

mingling with human nature. Comparing these two motives, we may say that they share the same idea, at least in the following point: whether philosopher or God, the reason for a being's descent to the cave is to bring justice or redemption to the people there.

34 Gregory of Nyssa, *Orat. cat.* 5 (GNO 3/4.18): ἐν γὰρ τῇ ὁμοιώσει τῇ κατὰ τὴν εἰκόνα πάντων ἐστὶ τῶν τὸ θεῖον χαρακτηριζόντων ἢ ἀπαρίθμησις. In this statement, "In the likeness according to the image there is the enumeration of all that characterizes the Divine Being," we cannot find so clear a distinction between εἰκών, 'the natural image of God in man', and ὁμοίωσις, 'the supernatural likeness resulting from grace' (see James Herbert Srawley, *The Catechetical Oration of Gregory of Nyssa* [Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1903], 24, for his note to the passage). Moreover, that for Gregory ὁμοίωσις θεῶ and μεθουσία θεοῦ are really synonyms is showed by a comparison of two passages in *In cant. cant. or.* 9 (GNO 6.271, line 11 and 280, line 11).

35 Gregory of Nyssa, *De perf.* (GNO 8/1.194–95).



Here, Gregory, in interpreting the passage “Blessed are the poor in spirit” (Matt 5:3), considers ‘the likeness to God’ as the goal of a virtuous life. Indeed, this homily, like traditional exegesis, regards the likeness to God as the goal of life. However, that which is passionless and undefiled totally eludes imitation by human beings. It is quite impossible for human nature. For this reason, Gregory’s insistence that beatitude is unattainable for human beings through a likeness to the divinity may require modifications in traditional exegesis. Is it really impossible for human beings to imitate the divine nature? To this question, Gregory answers as follows:

The Word seems to me to be using the words ‘poor in spirit’ to mean ‘voluntary humility’. The model for this is indicated by the Apostle when he speaks of the humility of God, ‘who, though he was rich, yet for our sakes became poor, so that we by his poverty might become rich’ (2 Cor 8,9). Every other aspect of the divine nature exceeds the limit of human littleness, whereas humility has a natural affinity with us, and grows up with those who arrive on the ground, who consist of earth and into earth dissolve (cf. Gen 3,19); consequently in what is natural and possible even you have imitated God and put on the blessed shape.<sup>36</sup>

The Lord makes our sense of superiority the starting-point of his beatitudes and evicts pride from our characters as being the prime source of evil so that we may gain for ourselves a share of his blessedness through imitation of him. It is noteworthy here that Gregory has transformed ‘likeness to God’ or ‘imitation of God’ into ‘likeness to Christ’, i.e. *imitatio Christi*. Gregory quotes Paul’s affirmation that “‘Christ Jesus, who though he existed in the form of God reckoned it not a prize to be equal with God, but emptied himself, taking the form of a slave’ (Phil 2,5–7);”<sup>37</sup> consequently, he transforms the traditional exegesis, which aims at likeness to God and regards release from the cave

36 Gregory of Nyssa, *De beat.* 1.4 (GNO 7/2.83): δοκεῖ μοι πτωχεῖαν πνεύματος τὴν ἐκούσιον ταπεινοφροσύνην ὀνομάζειν ὁ λόγος. ταύτης δὲ ὑπόδειγμα τὴν τοῦ θεοῦ πτωχεῖαν ὁ ἀπόστολος ἡμῖν λέγων προδείκνυσιν, ὃς δι’ ἡμᾶς ἐπτώχευσε πλούσιος ὢν, ἵνα ἡμεῖς τῇ ἐκείνου πτωχείᾳ πλουτήσωμεν. ἐπεὶ οὖν τὰ ἄλλα πάντα ὅσα περὶ τὴν θείαν καθορᾶται φύσιν ὑπερπίπτει τὸ μέτρον τῆς ἀνθρωπίνης βραχυότητος, ἣ δὲ ταπεινότης συμφοῆς τις ἡμῖν ἐστὶ καὶ σύντροφος τοῖς χαμαὶ ἐρχομένοις καὶ ἐκ γῆς τὴν σύστασιν ἔχουσι καὶ εἰς γῆν καταρρέουσι, ἐν τῷ κατὰ φύσιν σὺ καὶ δυνατῷ τὸν θεὸν μιμησάμενος τὴν μακαρίαν καὶ αὐτὸς ὑπέδυς μορφήν. English translation in Stuart George Hall, “Gregory of Nyssa: On the Beatitudes,” in Drobner and Viciano, *Gregory of Nyssa: Homilies on the Beatitudes*.

37 Gregory of Nyssa, *De beat.* 1.4 (GNO 7/2.84): Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ, ὃς ἐν μορφῇ θεοῦ ὑπάρχων οὐκ ἄπραγμὸν ἠγήσατο τὸ εἶναι ἴσα θεῷ, ἀλλ’ ἑαυτὸν ἐκένωσε μορφήν δούλου λαβών. An interesting



and contemplation as the ‘prize’, into one which regards “sharing in the good things” (ἡ τῶν ἀγαθῶν μετουσία) in this world as the “reward for virtue” (ἀθλον ἀρετῆς) in imitating the incarnated Christ.<sup>38</sup> The practice of virtue in contemplation is a means for becoming like God in the Platonic tradition. In Gregory, however, the practice of virtue is regarded as the sharing in good things, and it is a reward in itself. In this way, the transformation of the idea ‘likeness to God’ is made possible by the incarnation. In other words, in the context of the cave allegory, Gregory turns the exegesis of the Platonic tradition upside down, from an ascent toward the contemplation of the sun to its descent into the cave. Moreover, from a theological perspective on the image, Gregory, in emphasising the incarnation, suggests that the image of God cannot anymore be Christ’s divine nature; rather, it is Christ’s humanity that is both the image of God and the likeness of God. In this way, it can be said that, through Gregory’s innovative and systematic rewriting of the Platonic tradition, the imitation of Christ took the place of the traditional idea of the imitation of God, making its debut in the thought of the Christian fathers.

### 3.2 *Spiritual Restoration of Human Body through Resurrection*

Certainly, some scholars, such as J. Annas,<sup>39</sup> do not regard becoming like God as a flight from the world through the practice of virtue. Rather, they emphasise bringing the order and structure of the intellectual realm to the souls of others in the cave (*Respublica* 500c). To stress the contrast between the contemplation and the practice of virtue is, however, undoubtedly an Aristotelian style of exegesis.<sup>40</sup> One way or another, the perspective that regards both purification of the soul from worldly concerns and its contemplation as the likeness to God seems to have been prevalent since the time of the middle Platonists and Plotinus. In such a situation, Gregory turned the tide of Platonic tradition and boldly wove Paul’s theme into this Platonic warp. A good example of his challenge is his reinterpretation of the cave allegory, in which he shifts the goal of life as an ascent to the likeness to God to the descent of the sun and the imitation of Christ. How does he apply the idea of the resurrection, one

---

phrase “being born in the *likeness* of men” (ἐν ὁμοιώματι ἀνθρώπων γενόμενος) follows this quotation.

38 Gregory of Nyssa, *Orat. cat.* 5 (GNO 3/4.20).

39 Julia Annas, *Platonic Ethics, Old and New* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1999), 52–71.

40 In that sense, Runia’s view that we need to appeal to the role that *context* plays in the way Plato himself develops his themes seems to be persuasive.

of Paul's biblical themes, to the Platonic tradition?<sup>41</sup> Gregory considers this issue in *Dialogus de anima et resurrectione*, a kind of Christian *Phaedo*. Here, I consider Gregory's thought about the body (σῶμα) in this book to strengthen his reinterpretation of the 'likeness to God', by focusing on his totally different idea from the Platonic tradition.

Gregory and Plato differ on whether the connection between the soul and the body is maintained after death. For Plato or the Platonists, death means a release of the soul from the body and its purification. The purification thesis of *Phaedo*, in which the pure soul should abandon the body as much as possible, reflects the cave allegory. In comparison, Gregory makes Macrina, a character in a play, say the following in relation to the thesis of Paul:

The Lord seems to be teaching that we who are living in the *flesh* (σάρξ) ought as much as possible to separate ourselves and release ourselves from its hold by the life of virtue, so that after death we may not need another death to cleanse us from the remains of the fleshly glue.<sup>42</sup>

We can say that, by replacing the word 'body' with 'flesh', Gregory introduces Paul's distinction between the body and flesh, and thereby, modifies the theme of the soul's purification of Plato. Specifically, while flesh is related to human nature in its sinfulness and needs to be purified likewise in the Platonic tradition, the resurrection body somehow retains its material elements that are united with the soul. As a biblical support, he quotes Paul's assertion that "it is sown a physical body, it is raised a spiritual body" (1 Cor 15:42–44). Thus, unlike in the Platonic tradition, for Gregory the body, distinguished from flesh, need not be abandoned. On this point, another text of Gregory's states:

And this is the mystery of God's plan with regard to his death and his resurrection from the dead: that, rather than preventing the separation of his soul and body by death according to nature's necessary development, both would be reunited with each other in the resurrection.<sup>43</sup>

41 On this issue see Catharine P. Roth, "Platonic and Pauline Elements in the Ascent of the Soul in Gregory of Nyssa's *Dialogus On the Soul and Resurrection*," *vc* 46 (1992): 20–30.

42 Gregory of Nyssa, *De an. et res.* (GNO 3/3.63–64): οἰόμεθα τοῦτο δογματίζειν τὸν κύριον τὸ δεῖν ὅτι μάλιστα τοὺς ἐν σαρκὶ βιοτεύοντας διὰ τῆς κατ' ἀρετὴν ζωῆς χωρίζεσθαι πῶς καὶ ἀπολύεσθαι τῆς πρὸς αὐτὴν σχέσεως, ἵνα μετὰ τὸν θάνατον μὴ πάλιν ἄλλου θανάτου δεώμεθα τοῦ τὰ λείψανα τῆς σαρκώδους λύμης ἀποκαθαίροντος.

43 Gregory of Nyssa, *Orat. cat.* 16 (GNO 3/4.49): καὶ τοῦτό ἐστι τὸ μυστήριον τῆς τοῦ θεοῦ περὶ τὸν θάνατον οἰκονομίας καὶ τῆς ἐκ νεκρῶν ἀναστάσεως, τὸ διαλυθῆναι μὲν τῷ θανάτῳ τοῦ σώματος

God's plan (οἰκονομία) in the union of God and man in the incarnation is to effect the eternal union of the body and the soul of mankind. To this extent, it can be said that human nature as a union of body and soul is recovered spiritually by resurrection. Moreover, in the context of the cave allegory, a return to the body described as the descent into the cave is rewritten by Gregory as the transformation of the physical body into the spiritual body.

#### 4 Conclusion

The Platonic tradition, which regards the goal of human life as becoming like God by escaping from the cave, which is steeped in evil, and by abandoning the body, is reshaped by Gregory as follows: the cave allegory is transformed from the release of the soul from the cave to the descent of the sun into the cave. The becoming like God is changed from likeness to God to the imitation of Christ. The practising of virtue is reshaped from the ascent to cathartic virtues to the descent of humility. The body is no longer abandoned but rather is transformed into the spiritual body. Thus, Gregory of Nyssa introduced crucial Christian alterations into the Platonic traditional notion of 'becoming like God' and the cave allegory.<sup>44</sup>

#### Bibliography

- Alcinous. *Didaskalikos* (John Whittaker, ed., *Alcinoos. Enseignement des doctrines de Platon*. Paris: Les Belles Lettres, 1990. English translation by John M. Dillon, *Alcinous: The Handbook of Platonism*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1993).
- Basil. *Adversus Eunomium* (P. Georges-Matthieu and P. Bernard, eds, *Basile de Césarée. Contre Eunome*, SC, vols 299 and 305. Paris: Éditions du Cerf, 1982–1983).
- . *De Spiritu sancto* (P. Benoît, ed., *Basile de Césarée. Sur le Saint-Esprit*, SC, vol. 17bis. Paris: Éditions du Cerf, 1968. English translation by David Anderson, *St. Basil the Great: On the Holy Spirit*. New York: St Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1980).

---

τὴν ψυχὴν κατὰ τὴν ἀναγκαίαν τῆς φύσεως ἀκολουθίαν μὴ κωλύσαι. Related to this passage, on the precise relevance of the death and resurrection of Christ for salvation see Johannes Zachhuber, *Human Nature in Gregory of Nyssa: Philosophical Background and Theological Significance* (Leiden: Brill, 2000), 229–31.

44 However, Gregory did not entirely break away from the Platonic tradition. Rather, we can also find the traditional idea in Gregory. We must keep in mind the inconsistency of Gregory in this regard.

- Gregory of Nyssa. *Gregorii Nysseni Opera*, 10 vols. Leiden: Brill, 1972–2014.
- . *De beatitudinibus* (English translation in Stuart George Hall, “Gregory of Nyssa: On the Beatitudes.” In *Gregory of Nyssa: Homilies on the Beatitudes. An English Version with Commentary and Supporting Studies. Proceedings of the Eighth International Colloquium on Gregory of Nyssa (Paderborn, 14–18 September 1998)*, edited by Hubertus R. Drobner and Albert Viciano, VCSupp, vol. 52, 21–90. Leiden: Brill, 2000).
- . *Oratio catechetica* (English translation in James Herbert Srawley, *The Catechetical Oratio of Gregory of Nyssa*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1903.)
- Origen. *Commentarium in epistulam ad Romanos* (C.P. Hammond Bammel, Henri Crouzel, Luc Brésard, and Michel Fédou, eds, *Origène. Commentaire sur l'épître aux Romains*, SC, vols 532, 539, 543, and 555. Paris: Éditions du Cerf, 2009–2012).
- . *Contra Celsum* (Marcel Borret, ed., *Origène. Contre Celse*, SC, vols 132, 136, 147, 150, and 227. Paris: Éditions du Cerf, 1967–1976. English translation in Henry Chadwick, *Origen: Contra Celsum*, rev. ed. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1965).
- . *De principiis* (Henri Crouzel and Manlio Simonetti, eds, *Origène. Traité des principes*, SC, vols 252, 253, 268, 269, and 312. Paris: Éditions du Cerf, 1978–1984. English translation in George William Butterworth, *Origen: On First Principles*. London: SPCK, 1936).
- Philo. *De fuga et inuentione* (English translation in F.H. Colson and G.H. Whitaker, *Philo*, vol. 5, LCL. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1934).
- . *De officio mundi* (English translation in F.H. Colson and G.H. Whitaker, *Philo*, vol. 1, LCL. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1929).
- Plato. *Cratylus* (English translation in Harold North Fowler, *Plato*, vol. 4: *Cratylus, Parmenides, Greater Hippias, Lesser Hippias*, LCL. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1926).
- . *Phaedo* (English translation in Harold North Fowler, *Plato*, vol. 1: *Euthyphro, Apology, Crito, Phaedo, Phaedrus*, LCL. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1914).
- . *Respublica* (English translation in Paul Shorey, *Plato*, vols 5 and 6: *The Republic*, LCL. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1953–1956).
- . *Theaetetus* (English translation in Harold North Fowler, *Plato*, vol. 7: *Theaetetus, The Sophist*, LCL, rev. ed. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1928).
- Plotinus. *Enneades* (English translation in A.H. Armstrong, *Plotinus*, 7 vols, LCL. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1966–1988).
- Porphyry. *De antro nympharum* (Augustus Nauck, ed., *Porphyrii Philosophi Platonici opuscula selecta*, Bibliotheca Scriptorum Graecorum et Romanorum Teubnerina.

- Leipzig: Teubner, 1886. English translation in Thomas Taylor, *Select Works of Porphyry*. London: Thomas Rodd, 1823).
- Annas, Julia. *Platonic Ethics, Old and New*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1999.
- Dillon, John M. "The Knowledge of God in Origen." In *Knowledge of God in the Graeco-Roman World*, edited by R. van den Broek, T. Baarda, and J. Mansfeld, 219–28. Leiden: Brill, 1988.
- . "An Ethic for the Late Antique Sage." In *The Cambridge Companion to Plotinus*, edited by L.P. Gerson, 315–35. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996.
- Lossky, Vladimir. *In the Image and Likeness of God*. New York: St Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1974.
- Meredith, Anthony. "Plato's 'Cave' (*Republic* vii 514a–517e) in Origen, Plotinus, and Gregory of Nyssa." In *Studia Patristica*, vol. 27, edited by Elizabeth A. Livingstone, papers presented at the 11th International Conference on Patristic Studies, Oxford 1991, 49–61. Leuven: Peeters, 1993.
- . "Gregory of Nyssa: *De beatitudinibus*, Oratio 1: 'Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven' (Mt 5,3)." In *Gregory of Nyssa: Homilies on the Beatitudes. An English Version with Commentary and Supporting Studies. Proceedings of the Eighth International Colloquium on Gregory of Nyssa (Paderborn, 14–18 September 1998)*, edited by Hubertus R. Drobner and Albert Viciano, VCSupp, vol. 52, 93–109. Leiden: Brill, 2000.
- Merki, Hubert. *ΟΜΟΙΩΣΙΣ ΘΕΩ: Von der Platonischen Angleichung an Gott zur Gottähnlichkeit bei Gregor von Nyssa*. Freiburg: Paulusdruckerei, 1952.
- Roth, Catharine P. "Platonic and Pauline Elements in the Ascent of the Soul in Gregory of Nyssa's Dialogue *On the Soul and Resurrection*." *VC* 46 (1992): 20–30.
- Runia, David T. "The Theme of 'Becoming like God' in Plato's *Republic*." In *Dialogues on Plato's Politeia (Republic)*, edited by N. Notomi and L. Brisson, 288–93. Sankt Augustin: Akademia Verlag, 2013.
- Swaley, James Herbert. "St Gregory of Nyssa on the Sinlessness of Christ." *JTS* 7 (1906): 434–41.
- Zachhuber, Johannes. *Human Nature in Gregory of Nyssa: Philosophical Background and Theological Significance*, Leiden: Brill, 2000.

# Origen after the Origenist Controversy

*Miyako Demura*

## 1 Preface

Although Origen of Alexandria (185–254 CE) influenced not only the desert monks, the Cappadocians, and Augustine of Hippo<sup>1</sup>, but also biblical interpretation of later church history, he has suffered from various attacks after his death and has been underestimated for a long time. It was because of the controversy over the orthodoxy of Origen and his influences upon the desert monks that the Origenist controversy broke out in the fourth century.

In that century the church was transformed from a persecuted sect into the established religion of the Christianised empire, and a new constellation of church politics was advancing. As Elizabeth Clark and other scholars reveal, the Origenist controversy of the fourth century engaged a complex web of social relations, church politics, and ascetic theological concerns.<sup>2</sup> Thus, unfortunate incidents happened in the history of the early church such that many of Origen's treatises were lost and finally Emperor Justinian passed ten anathemas against him in 543.

But recent Origenian scholarship is very active in seeing Origen in a new light and producing new editions and translations of his works, as well as studies. The International Origen Congresses (Colloquium Origenianum), which

---

1 Charles Kannengiesser and William L. Petersen, eds, *Origen of Alexandria: His World and His Legacy*, Christianity and Judaism in Antiquity, vol. 1 (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1988); Henri Crouzel, *Origen: The Life and Thought of the First Great Theologian*, trans. A.S. Worrall (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1989); Samuel Rubenson, "Origen in the Egyptian Monastic Tradition of the Fourth Century," in *Origeniana Septima: Origenes in den Auseinandersetzungen des 4. Jahrhunderts*, ed. W.A. Bienert and U. Kühneweg, BETL, vol. 137 (Leuven: Peeters, 1999), 310–37; and Alfons Fürst, *Von Origenes und Hieronymus zu Augustinus: Studien zur antiken Theologiegeschichte*, AKG, Bd 115 (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2011), 487–500.

2 Elizabeth A. Clark, *The Origenist Controversy: The Cultural Construction of an Early Christian Debate* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1992); and J. Rebecca Lyman, "The Making of a Heretic: The Life of Origen in Epiphanius *Panarion* 64," in *Studia Patristica*, vol. 31, ed. Elizabeth A. Livingstone, papers presented at the 12th International Conference on Patristic Studies, Oxford 1995 (Leuven: Peeters, 1997), 445–51.

have taken place every four years since 1973, are contributing to a reevaluation of Origen in his own cultural-religious setting. Ronald E. Heine expresses such recent research trends as follows: “Our first starting point would be that we need to carefully distinguish the theological views attributed to Origen by later Origenists from the views of Origen himself.”<sup>3</sup> In this essay I would like to reassess the process of the Origenist controversy in the Alexandrian religious-cultural context, focusing on Origen’s role as biblical scholar, and evaluate Origen’s theological legacy for church history.

For this purpose I shall first survey how Origen was criticised by the heresiologist Epiphanius (315–403 CE) so effectively that Epiphanius’ main charges against him greatly influenced the development of the Origenist controversies. In this respect I shall consider the resurrection theory of Origen in *Peri archon* (*De principiis*), because Epiphanius’ accusations against Origen in *Panarion* 64 seem ultimately to centre on the problem of Origen’s resurrection theory. In order to clarify the main issues of this controversy I shall consider the reason why in his accusations against Origen’s resurrection theory Epiphanius employed rather ambiguous statements (1). Next I shall survey how Epiphanius’ charges operated powerfully in the controversies over Origen and Origenism that followed, and influenced the ten anathemas by Justinian against Origen in 543 (2). Then I shall turn to Origen himself, focusing on Origen’s role as a biblical scholar in the Alexandrian cultural-religious context. In this part, I shall focus on his reception of the Pauline letters into his biblical interpretations as his principal exegetical method (3). Finally I turn to Origen’s biblical interpretations from our contemporary interdisciplinary viewpoint and consider how Origen contributed to the formation of Christian theology when he confronted both the excessive spiritualisation of Gnostic interpretations and the literal interpretations of Jewish Christians in Alexandria and how, after moving to Caesarea, Origen undertook to preach in the local community, which comprised Gentile as well as Jewish believers. We can see that Origen as a biblical exegete tackled theological problems that had threatened the identity of the early church, and we can evaluate Origen’s theological legacy with respect to subsequent church history (4).

## 2 *Panarion* 64 and the Condemnation of Origen

We are fortunate that, in tracing the complicated history of the Origenist controversy, the comprehensive study of Jon Dechow, *Dogma and Mysticism in*

---

3 Ronald E. Heine, *Origen: Scholarship in the Service of the Church*, Christian Theology in Context (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), 19.



*Early Christianity: Epiphanius of Cyprus and the Legacy of Origen*,<sup>4</sup> gives us a fruitful overview, and I owe much to his analysis. As Dechow's study points out, the main charges against Origen from the third to the sixth centuries show the significance of Epiphanius' polemic. In fact, his *Panarion* (376 CE) was one of the most decisive texts compiled to accuse Origen and his legacy between the third and the fifth centuries and contained an exhaustive list of heretical thoughts inside and outside of early Christianity.

At first I wish to pay attention to Dechow's remark that "mainstream Egyptian orthodoxy was for the most part sympathetic to Origen until the time of Archbishop Theophilus at the close of the fourth century."<sup>5</sup> If it was so, we must ask the reason why Origen's view became susceptible to being seen as heretical in the church afterwards. A significant clue that Epiphanius has provided us was in his assertion:

The heresy that sprang from [Origen] first began in the land of the Egyptians, and [it is] now [found] among some very prominent people also known for having taken up the monastic life.<sup>6</sup>

About this assertion, Dechow points out the vagueness of his description, especially in relation to the geographical spread of Origenism, the extent of Origen's influence, and the naming of individuals. Generally speaking, Epiphanius' information appears to be very vague and loose. Dechow speculates about this vagueness from two points. One is that it "may be prompted by ignorance of the full extent of Origen's influence" and second is that "his vagueness may stem from reluctance to accuse directly monks and bishops otherwise held in high esteem among the orthodox."<sup>7</sup> Then Dechow supposes that Epiphanius' "primary attention must have directed toward 'orthodox' Egyptian monasticism, which he knows personally from the time of his early ascetic training."<sup>8</sup>

---

4 Jon F. Dechow, *Dogma and Mysticism in Early Christianity: Epiphanius of Cyprus and the Legacy of Origen*, Patristic Monograph Series, vol. 13 (Macon, Ga: Mercer University Press, 1988); and idem, "The Heresy Charges against Origen," in *Origeniana Quarta: Die Referate des 4. Internationalen Origeneskongress*, ed. L. Lies (Innsbruck: Tyrolia-Verlag, 1987), 112–22.

5 Dechow, *Dogma*, 143.

6 Epiphanius, *Pan. haer.* 64.4.1 (GCS 31.409): Ἡ δὲ ἐξ αὐτοῦ φύσα αἵρεσις πρῶτον μὲν ἐν τῇ πᾶν Αἰγυπτίων χώρᾳ ὑπάρχουσα, τὰ νῦν δὲ παρ' αὐτοῖς τοῖς ἐξοχωτάτοις καὶ δοκοῦσι τὸν μονήρη βίον ἀναδεδεῖχθαι <εὐρίσκειται>. English translation in Frank Williams, *The Panarion of Epiphanius of Salamis, Book II and III (Sects 47–80, De Fide)*, Nag Hammadi and Manichaean Studies, vol. 36, 2nd ed. (Leiden: Brill, 2008). Cf. Dechow, "Heresy Charges," 118; and idem, *Dogma*, 139.

7 Dechow, *Dogma*, 145.

8 Ibid., 146.



Although charges against Origen were compiled by various critics like Methodius, and by defenders like Pamphilus/Eusebius (in rebuttal)<sup>9</sup>, the reason why Dechow would focus on Epiphanius among these critics rests on two points. One is that when we see the controversy between Jerome and Rufinus, and in the various renderings of charges against Origen from the third to the sixth centuries, Epiphanius' charges seem to be fundamental, and second is the fact that the main points of the ten anathemas in 543 CE had already appeared in his *Panarion* 64.<sup>10</sup> Therefore, I shall follow the process of the Origenist controversy focusing on the decisive role of Epiphanius and his lists.

Concerning the first reason, Dechow summarises seven charges against Origen in *Panarion* 64 as follows:<sup>11</sup>

- Charge 1: subordinationism (internal relation of the Trinity)
- Charge 2: preexistence of souls (nature, fall, and rise of rational beings and souls, with the related issue of the body as bond and punishment)
- Charge 3: loss of God's image (Adam's alleged loss of God's image)
- Charge 4: "garment of skins" (exegesis of "garment of skins" [Gen 3:21] as bodies)
- Charge 5: resurrection (resurrection of the dead)
- Charge 6: 'Genesis' allegory (allegorical interpretation of scripture, especially of paradise and its waters)
- Charge 7: 'Genesis' allegory (allegorising of the waters above the heavens and the waters under the earth)

When Dechow analyses the structure of this list, he distinguishes charge 1 and the remaining six charges, and remarks that after dealing with charge 1, "he [Epiphanius] devotes the remainder of *Panarion* 64 to the refutation of what he consider a more serious deficiency in Origen's thought, the doctrine of the resurrection, for which the outline of the remaining six charges is preparatory."<sup>12</sup> When we see charge 1, it becomes evident that although Epiphanius accused

---

9 Ibid., 244, enumerates the main charges against Origen: Methodius, Pamphilus/Eusebius (in rebuttal), an anonymous author (possibly Didymus) whose rebuttal is cited by Photius, Epiphanius, Jerome, Rufinus (in rebuttal), Theophilus, Justinian (543 CE), and the monks (especially Conon) responsible for the fifteen anathemas associated with the fifth ecumenical council at Constantinople (553 CE).

10 Ibid., 246.

11 Dechow, "Heresy Charges," 112–22; and idem, *Dogma*, 246–47 and 273–390.

12 Dechow, "Heresy Charges," 113.

Origen of subordinating the Son to the Father in the theology of the Trinity, actually his intention was to reveal that Origen's false assumptions about the Trinity passed directly to 'Arius' and 'the Anomoians'. Therefore it emerges that Epiphanius did not try to deal with the scope of Origen's theology but with its final outcome and his influences upon many contemporary monastic leaders in Egypt.<sup>13</sup>

Among other charges, Dechow regards charge 5 to be the most important, because for Epiphanius "the land of the Egyptians' is where Origenism began . . . and the belief about the lack of fleshly resurrection was held by many monastic leaders 'in Egypt' and '[the] Thebaid'."<sup>14</sup> Also, Epiphanius shaped his polemic to a great extent based on Methodius. In fact, Epiphanius cited from Origen's *Excerpta in Psalmum 1* with the epitome and extension of it from Methodius, and continues by quoting fully half of Methodius' *De resurrectione*, itself designated to refute Origen and Origenists from materialism in Asia Minor.<sup>15</sup> Therefore in the next part, I shall limit my consideration to the problem of resurrection, and deal with Epiphanius' polemical point against Origen's interpretation of resurrection.

When he criticised Origen's resurrection theory, it is remarkable that Epiphanius accused Origen by means of such ambiguous and complicated statements, which at first glance seem to be mutually exclusive. He affirmed that Origen "degrades the resurrection of the dead, at one time supporting it by argument, at another time denying it altogether, and at still another time [saying] it is a partial resurrection."<sup>16</sup>

In order to seek the reason for his ambiguous statements, especially why they are expressed in three parts, it seems to be sufficient to refer to Origen's views in *Peri archon* 2.10. As Origen unfolded his polemics against the wrong or inadequate interpretations of his different objectors within the church individually, and therein he tried to offer Pauline evidence to support his arguments, his texts give us a clue as to why Epiphanius made such contradictory statements against Origen's resurrection theory. In the first text, Origen aimed at some heretics in the church as follows:

13 Ibid., 118.

14 Dechow, *Dogma*, 146.

15 Dechow, "Heresy Charges," 112–22.

16 Epiphanius, *Pan. haer* 64.4.10 (GCS 31.412–13): τὴν δὲ τῶν νεκρῶν ἀνάστασιν ἑλλιπῆ ποιεῖται, πῆ μὲν λόγῳ συνιστῶν ταύτην, πῆ δὲ ἐξαρνούμενος τελειότατα, ἄλλοτε δὲ καὶ μέρος ἐξ αὐτῆς ἀνίστασθαι <λέγων>.

The chief objectors are the heretics, who must, I think, be answered in the following manner. If they admit, with us, that there is a resurrection of the dead, let them answer this question: “What was it that died? Was it not a body?” If so, there will be a resurrection of the body. Then again, let them say whether they believe that we are to possess bodies, or not. I submit that, seeing that the Apostle Paul says: “It is sown a natural body, it will rise again a spiritual body” (1 Cor 15:44), these men cannot deny that a body rises . . . What then? If it is certain that we are to possess bodies, and if those bodies which have fallen are declared to rise again—and the expression “rise again” could not properly be used except of that which had previously fallen—then no one can doubt that these bodies rise again.<sup>17</sup>

Some heretics criticised in this text were described by Origen as those who “make this objection to the faith of the church, that our beliefs about the resurrection are altogether foolish and silly.”<sup>18</sup> In this first text it is important to see that Origen used one formula in the polemical intention which could be found in other early Christian treatises on the resurrection of the dead. According to the study of A.H.C. van Eijk, there can be traced the successive appearances of one formula in early Christian treatises—“only that can rise which has previously fallen”—in the context of anti-Gnostic polemics and van Eijk refers to this text of Origen.<sup>19</sup> Van Eijk at first deals with the texts of *Epistula*

---

17 Origen, *De princ.* 2.10.1 (SC 252.374–76): “praecipue haeretici, quibus hoc modo arbitror respondendum. Si confitentur etiam ipsi quia resurrectio sit mortuorum, respondeant nobis: quid est quod mortuum est, nonne corpus? Corporis ergo resurrectio fiet. Tum deinde dicant si utendum putant nobis esse corporibus aut non? Arbitror apostolo Paulo dicente quia *seminatur corpus animale, resurget corpus spiritale*, istos negare non posse quod corpus resurgat . . . Quid ergo? Si certum est quia corporibus nobis utendum sit, et corpora ea, quae ceciderunt, resurgere praedicantur (non enim proprie resurgere dicitur nisi id, quod ante ceciderit), nulli dubium est idcirco ea resurgere.” English translation in George William Butterworth, *Origen: On First Principles* (London: SPCK, 1936).

18 Origen, *De princ.* 2.10.1 (SC 252.374): “maxime propter hoc quod offenduntur quidam in ecclesiastica fide, quod uelut stulte et penitus insipienter de resurrectione credamus.”

19 Van Eijk points out the similarity of the argument between this passage of Origen and the texts of Tertullian (*De res.* 18 and 53). On this formula see A.H.C. van Eijk, “‘Only That Can Rise Which Has Previously Fallen’: The History of a Formula,” *JTS* n.s. 22 (1971): 517–29. See Miyako Demura, “The Resurrection of the Body and Soul in Origen’s *Contra Celsum*,” in *Studia Patristica*, vol. 18/3, ed. Elizabeth A. Livingstone, papers presented at the 9th International Conference on Patristic Studies, Oxford 1983 (Leuven: Peeters, 1990), 375–81; and eadem, “The Biblical Tradition of Resurrection in Early Christianity; Pauline

*apostolorum*, Justin's *De resurrectione*, and Tertullian's *De resurrectione carnis* and *Aduersus Marcionem*, and regards these texts as the first stage, which "serves as an argument against the heretical (gnostic) assertion of a purely spiritual resurrection."<sup>20</sup> And then he deals with Origen and Methodius as the second stage which "is reached with the third-century discussion on the resurrection."<sup>21</sup> In so far as anti-Gnostic polemics are concerned, van Eijk is correct that Origen took the same line as these early Christian treatises. And Origen's argument seems to correspond to Epiphanius' first statement: "at one time supporting it by argument."

But when we see Origen's next arguments from his following texts, which van Eijk does not quote, we recognise that Origen did not use this formula wholly to defend the resurrection of the flesh. Rather, he used this formula to assert the identity of the body before and after the resurrection, and what is more, he tried to emphasise the spiritual aspect of resurrection in the following arguments:

And if it is true that they rise again and do so as "spiritual," there is no doubt that this means that they rise again from the dead with corruption banished and mortality laid aside; otherwise it would seem vain and useless for a man to rise from the dead in order to die over again. Finally, this can be the more clearly understood by carefully observing what is the quality of the "natural body" which, when sown in the earth, can reproduce the quality of a "spiritual body." For it is from the natural body that the very power and grace of the resurrection evokes the spiritual body, when it transforms it from dishonor to glory.<sup>22</sup>

From this text, we can see why Origen appeared to Epiphanius as "at another time denying it altogether." As we saw, Epiphanius' accusation was mainly based on Methodius' *De resurrectione*, which was designed to refute Origen

---

Influence on Origen's Theology of Resurrection," *Annual of the Japanese Biblical Institute* 25/26 (1999/2000): 135–51.

20 Van Eijk, "The History of a Formula," 522.

21 *Ibid.*, 522.

22 Origen, *De princ.* 2.10.1 (SC 252.376): "Quae si uerum est quod resurgunt et spiritalia resurgunt, dubium non est quin abiecta corruptione et deposita mortalitate resurgere dicantur a mortuis; alioquin uanum uidebitur et superfluum resurgere quem a mortuis, ut iterum moriatur. Quod ita demum intellegi euidentius potest, si qui diligenter aduertat, quae sit animalis corporis qualitas, quae in terram seminata spiritalis corporis reparat qualitatem. Ex animali namque corpore ipsa uirtus resurrectionis et gratia spiritalis corpus educit, cum id ab indignitate transmutat ad gloriam."

and Origenists from materialism in Asia Minor.<sup>23</sup> If Epiphanius presupposed the materialistic understanding of resurrection, Origen, contrary to popular belief, defended the spiritual body by taking up the Pauline testimony of the transformation in order to assert the discontinuity of the quality of the body before and after the resurrection.

Concerning Epiphanius' third statement against Origen that "at still another time [he said] it is a partial resurrection" we can see from the following passage that Origen interpreted the Pauline passage to criticise the simple understandings of the church that asserted the resurrection of the flesh.

We now direct the discussion to some of our own people, who either from poverty of intellect or from lack of instruction introduce an exceedingly low and mean idea of the resurrection of the body. We ask these men in what manner they think that the "natural body" will, by the grace of the resurrection, be changed and become "spiritual"; and in what manner they believe that what is "sown in weakness" will be "raised in power," and what is sown "in dishonor" is to "rise in glory", and what is sown "in corruption" is to be transformed into "incorruption" (cf. 1 Cor 15:42–44)? Certainly if they believe the apostle, who says that the body, when it rises in glory and in power and in incorruptibility, has already become spiritual, it seems absurd and contrary to his meaning to say that it is still entangled in the passions of flesh and blood, seeing that he says plainly, "Flesh and blood shall not inherit the kingdom of God, neither shall corruption inherit incorruption" (1 Cor 15:50).<sup>24</sup>

In this passage, we can see that Origen severely criticised the ordinary belief of the church of his days held by "some of our own people" and their materialistic view of resurrection on the basis of Pauline testimony of resurrection.

<sup>23</sup> Dechow, "Heresy Charges", 112–22.

<sup>24</sup> Origen, *De princ.* 2.10.3 (SC 252.): "Nunc uero sermonem conuertimus ad nonnullos nostrorum, qui uel pro intellectus exiguitate uel explanationis inopia ualde uilem et abiectum sensum de resurrectione corporis introducunt. Quos interrogamus, quomodo intellegunt animale corpus gratia resurrectionis immutandum et spiritale futurum, et quomodo quod in infirmitate seminatur, resurrecturum sentiant in uirtute, et quod in ignobilitate, quomodo resurget in gloria, et quod in corruptione, quomodo ad incorruptionem transferatur. Quod utique si credunt apostolo quia corpus in gloria et in uirtute et in incorruptibilitate resurgens, spiritale iam effectum sit, absurdum uidetur et contra apostoli sensum dicere, id rursus carnis et sanguinis passionibus implicari, cum manifeste dicat apostolus: *Quoniam caro et sanguis regnum dei non possidebunt, neque corruptio incorruptionem possidebit.*"

Considering the fact that Epiphanius had accepted the materialistic understanding of resurrection from Methodius, he could not have granted Origen's interpretation. But here Epiphanius described it by means of a very ambiguous expression as "a partial resurrection," because Origen developed his resurrection theory by appealing to Pauline testimony, and his views were likely to have had wide support among mainstream Egyptian orthodoxy. It fits with Dechow's observation on Origen's views about resurrection. He concludes that, "Analogous to Platonic, Aristotelian, and gnostic views of corporeality, Origen's belief was yet basically a way of professing traditional Pauline/New Testament resurrection doctrine/in the contemporary terms of intellectual Alexandrian Christianity."<sup>25</sup>

### 3 Influences of Epiphanius on the Ten Anathemas against Origen in 543

From the comparison of their polemical texts, it becomes evident that to Epiphanius, Origen was the symbol and representative of the ideology and allegorisation that lent support to this type of resurrection theory and ascetic pursuit in Christian circles in Egypt. Epiphanius played a decisive role in producing a new classification of orthodoxy and heresy, for his *Panarion* 64.4.3–11 summarises the main thrust of previous anti-Origenist polemic and provides the foundational structure for subsequent accusation. In order to confirm this point, Dechow remarks that, "although the substance of *Panarion* 64 is basically Methodian, Epiphanius' primary contribution is in accentuating the acerbity of the anti-Origenist polemic along Eustathian lines and in providing a popularized summary of anti-Origenist tenets."<sup>26</sup> We shall see his influence over the Origenist controversies after him.

It is a fact that the main points of the ten anathemas in 543 CE had already appeared in Epiphanius' *Panarion* 64. Dechow shows us that the aftermath of *Panarion* 64 in the sixth century may be seen as a further development of the outline of its criticism.<sup>27</sup> He analyses in detail the relationship between Epiphanius' summary of charges and Emperor Justinian's refutation of Origen in 543, especially the ten anathemas against him.

<sup>25</sup> Dechow, *Dogma*, 384.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*, 248. Cf. 116–18, and 123.

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*, 447.

1. If anyone says or holds that people's souls were preexistent, i.e., that long ago they were minds and holy powers, but reached a satiety of divine contemplation and made a turn for the worth and for this reason cooled from the love of God, and therefore were called souls and were sent down into bodies for punishment; let that one be anathema!
2. If anyone says or holds that the Lord's soul was preexistent and was united with the God Logos before the incarnation and birth from a virgin; let that one be anathema!
3. If anyone says or holds that the body of our Lord Jesus Christ was first fashioned in the womb of the holy virgin and afterwards the God Logos and the soul, since it had been preexistent, were united to it; let that one be anathema!
4. If anyone says or holds that the Logos of God was made like all the heavenly orders, becoming cherubim for the cherubim and seraphim for the seraphim and being made like absolutely all the powers above; let that one be anathema!
5. If anyone says or holds that in the resurrection people's bodies rise spherically formed and does not confess that we rise upright; let that one be anathema!
6. If anyone says [or holds] that heaven and sun and moon and stars and waters above the heavens are certain ensouled and rational powers; let that one be anathema!
7. If anyone says or holds that the lord Christ in the age to come will be crucified for demons, just as [he was] for people; let that one be anathema!
8. If anyone says or holds, either that God's power is limited or that he created [only] as much as he could embrace and conceive or that the creatures are coeternal with God; let that one be anathema!
9. If anyone says or holds that the punishment of the demons and impious people is temporary and that it will come to an end at some time or, specifically, that there will be a restoration for demons and evil people; let that one be anathema!
- [10.] So anathema let Origen, also called Adamantius, be who, has asserted these things, with his abominable and accursed doctrines, and every person who thinks these things or supports [them] or in any way at all, at any time whatsoever, dares to contend for them!<sup>28</sup>

---

28 Justinian, *Edictum contra Origenem* (Eduard Schwartz, ed., *Acta Conciliorum Oecumenicorum*, t. 3: *Collectio Sabbaitica contra Acephalos et Origeniastas destinata. Insunt acta synodorum Constantinopolitanae et Hierosolymitanae a. 536* [Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1940], 213–14: 1. Εἴ τις λέγει ἢ ἔχει προυπάρχειν τὰς τῶν ἀνθρώπων ψυχὰς οἷα



We see that at the beginning of Justinian's anathema 10, "Origen, also [called] Adamantius," recalls the opening words of *Panarion* 64, where the name and surname of "Origen, also called Adamantius," are specified, and that the other nine anathemas too are in reference to him. Here Origen is specified as the advocate of these "abominable and accursed doctrines." Although Epiphanius' list as such is not adopted here, its major emphases are covered and continued. Justinian's attack is seen to lay stress on the subject treated under Epiphanius' charge 2 (souls), along with the related charge 3 (cosmic restoration). Dechow speculates that Justinian, in his survey of scripture and the church fathers against Origen, does not mention Methodius or Epiphanius, but draws on Theophilus' lost writing to the Egyptian monks and on the synodical letters of 400 to combat Evagrian monks of the New Laura in sixth-century Palestine.<sup>29</sup>

Concerning the problem of resurrection, the view in anathema 5 could be illustrated by the doctrine of the spiritual body abundantly enunciated in the Macarian homilies and the writings of Evagrius.<sup>30</sup> In fact, this list does not so much reflect the theology of Origen as Evagrian theology and practices. It is

---

πρώην νόας οὔσας καὶ ἀγίας δυνάμεις, κόρον δὲ λαβούσας τῆς θείας θεωρίας καὶ πρὸς τὸ χεῖρον τραπέϊσας καὶ διὰ τοῦτο ἀποψυγείσας μὲν τῆς τοῦ θεοῦ ἀγάπης, ἐντεῦθεν δὲ ψυχὰς ὀνομασθείσας καὶ τιμωρίας χάριν εἰς σώματα καταπεμφθείσας, ἀνάθεμα ἔστω. 2. Εἴ τις λέγει ἢ ἔχει τὴν τοῦ κυρίου ψυχὴν προυπάρχειν καὶ ἡνωμένην γεγενῆσθαι τῷ θεῷ λόγῳ πρὸ τῆς ἐκ παρθένου σαρκώσεώς τε καὶ γεννήσεως, ἀνάθεμα ἔστω. 3. Εἴ τις λέγει ἢ ἔχει πρῶτον πεπλάσθαι τὸ σῶμα τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ ἐν τῇ μήτραι τῆς ἀγίας παρθένου καὶ μετὰ ταῦτα ἐνωθῆναι αὐτῷ τὸν θεὸν λόγον καὶ τὴν ψυχὴν ὡς προυπάρξασαν, ἀνάθεμα ἔστω. 4. Εἴ τις λέγει ἢ ἔχει πᾶσι τοῖς οὐρανίοις τάγμασιν ἐξομοιωθῆναι τὸν τοῦ θεοῦ λόγον, γενόμενον τοῖς χερουβὶμ χερουβὶμ καὶ τοῖς σεραφὶμ σεραφὶμ καὶ πάσαις ἀπλῶς ταῖς ἄνω δυνάμεσιν ἐξομοιωθέντα, ἀνάθεμα ἔστω. 5. Εἴ τις λέγει ἢ ἔχει ἐν τῇ ἀναστάσει σφαιροειδῆ τὰ τῶν ἀνθρώπων ἐγείρεσθαι σώματα καὶ οὐχ ὁμολογεῖ ὀρθοῦς ἡμᾶς ἐγείρεσθαι, ἀνάθεμα ἔστω. 6. Εἴ τις λέγει <ἢ ἔχει> οὐρανὸν καὶ ἥλιον καὶ σελήνην καὶ ἀστέρας καὶ ὕδατα τὰ ὑπεράνω τῶν οὐρανῶν ἐμψύχους καὶ λογικὰς εἶναι τινὰς δυνάμεις, ἀνάθεμα ἔστω. 7. Εἴ τις λέγει ἢ ἔχει ὅτι ὁ δεσπότης Χριστὸς ἐν τῷ μέλλοντι αἰῶνι σταυρωθήσεται ὑπὲρ δαιμόνων, καθὰ καὶ ὑπὲρ ἀνθρώπων, ἀνάθεμα ἔστω. 8. Εἴ τις λέγει ἢ ἔχει ἢ πεπερασμένην εἶναι τὴν τοῦ θεοῦ δύναμιν καὶ τοσαῦτα αὐτὸν δημιουργῆσαι ὅσων περιδόξασθαι καὶ νοεῖν ἠδύνατο, ἢ τὰ κτίσματα συναῖδια εἶναι τῷ θεῷ, ἀνάθεμα ἔστω. 9. Εἴ τις λέγει ἢ ἔχει πρόσκαιρον εἶναι τὴν τῶν δαιμόνων καὶ ἀσεβῶν ἀνθρώπων κόλασιν καὶ τέλος κατὰ τινὰ χρόνον αὐτῆν ἔξειν ἢ γοῦν ἀποκατάστασιν ἔσεσθαι δαιμόνων ἢ ἀσεβῶν ἀνθρώπων, ἀνάθεμα ἔστω. 10. Ἀνάθεμα καὶ Ὀριγένηι τῷ καὶ Ἀδαμαντίῳ τῷ ταῦτα ἐκθεμένῳ μετὰ τῶν μουσάρων αὐτοῦ καὶ ἐπικαταράτων δογματῶν καὶ παντὶ προσώπῳ φρονοῦντι ταῦτα ἢ ἐκδικοῦντι ἢ κατὰ τι παντελῶς ἐν οἰωιδῆποτε χρόνῳ τούτων ἀντιποιεῖσθαι τολμῶντι. Here I use the English translation of Dechow, *Dogma*, 449–51.

29 Dechow, *Dogma*, 451.

30 Dechow, "Heresy Charges," 118. On Evagrius' thought about the spiritual body see A. Guillaumont, *Les 'Kephalaia gnostica' d'Évagre le Pontique et l'histoire de l'Origenisme chez les Grecs et chez les Syriens*, Patristica Sorbonensia, vol. 5 (Paris: Éditions du Seuil, 1962).



noteworthy that Clark considers it an essential question whether the debate was really over Origen. She concludes that “Origen served as a code word for various theological concerns problematic to Christians at the turn of the fifth century,”<sup>31</sup> and situates Evagrius as a central force in the western Origenist debate.<sup>32</sup> Concerning the problem of Evagrius, I would like to reserve my opinion here, but it seems to be sufficient to refer to Dechow’s comprehensive remarks about Evagrian Origenism as follows:

The emphasis with Evagrius, though, should be less on his role as “the founder of monastic mysticism” and more on his importance as heir to Christian Egypt’s ascetic traditions. The ideals were already expressed by Clement and Origen of Alexandria; concretized in new ways by Anthony, Pachomius, and Amoun; modified by Didymus, the Macarii, and their associates at Alexandria and Nitria; adapted by the Cappadocian fathers, especially Gregory of Nyssa; and integrated with the practical insight of numerous desert fathers and mothers, now intent on deeds of mercy, now engaged in the quest for passionlessness of this asceticism—from his base of operations at Nitria for two years and Cellia for fourteen—Evagrius found his literal and spiritual home.<sup>33</sup>

Epiphanius’ attitude toward Christian heresy is that of a conservative Nicene loyalist who understands the Christian past not with an appreciation of its abundant multiplicity, but with an apprehensiveness toward those aspects of it that seem to him to dilute the supposed original purity of the revelation once given through Christ and the apostles.<sup>34</sup> Diversity and range of theological opinion seem to be the main issues in the Origenist controversy, and it was not theoretical to Epiphanius; his interest in heresiology reflected his experience as an ascetic and bishop within the divided fourth-century church. As has been thoroughly outlined by Dechow and Clark, Epiphanius’ theological interests were deeply shaped by his asceticism and conflicts within the networks of ascetic teachers and communities.<sup>35</sup> Now we shall turn to Origen and consider his theological contribution in the Alexandrian cultural context.

---

<sup>31</sup> Clark, *Origenist Controversy*, 6.

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*, 7.

<sup>33</sup> Dechow, *Dogma*, 177.

<sup>34</sup> *Ibid.*, 93.

<sup>35</sup> Lyman, “The Making of a Heretic,” 445–51.

#### 4 Origen and the Alexandrian Philological Tradition

When Origen was born in 185 and brought up in Alexandria, this city was known as one of the most famous cultural metropolises in the ancient Mediterranean world, and attracted various pagan philosophers and religious groups like Jews, Christians, and Gnostics. A fragment from *Commentarii in Iohannem*, which would have been a part of one of the books Origen wrote in Alexandria, suggests that Origen knew Christians there who were circumcised and “wish to embrace Judaism openly.”<sup>36</sup>

Concerning the structure of the Alexandrian Christian community in the second century, we know the list provided by Eusebius of seven men who allegedly led the Christian community in Alexandria in the time between Mark, whom he asserts first evangelised Alexandria, and bishop Demetrius at the time of Origen.<sup>37</sup> He intended these men to be understood as bishops of the Alexandrian Christian community, but his description was elusive and no other ancient Christian writers mentioned them. Ritter argues that the community was led by a presbyter system on the model of the synagogue of the diaspora, and Heine accepts his suggestion.<sup>38</sup> If the Christian community in Alexandria was so strongly Jewish, it could be supposed that no clear distinction between Christians and Jews was made until sometime in the second century.

Alexandria was also known as a philological centre of Homeric studies. With regard to the development of allegorical interpretation in Alexandrian cultural and religious settings, Maren R. Niehoff shows in his recent monograph how thoroughly Alexandrian Jews, contemporary with Philo, were accustomed to Homeric scholarship. He tries to discern some traces of Homeric scholarship in the controversial situation of Philo with his Alexandrian colleagues from his allegorical commentaries, questions and answers, and expositions of the law, and says:

Philo's ‘quarrelsome’ colleagues must be appreciated in this context of Homeric scholarship . . . Unable either to offer a proper literal explanation

36 Origen, *Comm. in Ioh. frag.* 8 (GCS 4.490): τὴν σάρκα περιτεμνόμενοι καὶ ἐν τῷ προφανεῖ ἰουδαΐζειν θέλοντες.

37 Eusebius, *Hist. eccl.* 2.16.1; 2.24); 3.14, 21; 4.1, 4; and 4.5.5 (SC 31.71, 91, 119, 125, 160, 163, and 164).

38 A.M. Ritter, “De Polycarpe à Clément aux origines d’Alexandrie chrétienne,” in *Αλεξανδρινα: Hellenisme, judaïsme et christianisme à Alexandrie: Mélanges offerts au P. Claude Mondésert*, Patrimoines (Paris: Éditions du Cerf, 1987), 163–65; and Heine, *Origen*, 32.

or to have recourse to allegory, they rejected certain biblical verses . . . they did not shrink from textual emendations of the Jewish Scriptures, hoping to restore their original consistency and beauty.<sup>39</sup>

According to Niehoff, “Philo insists for the first time that extended allegorical interpretations are not a whimsical idea in the reader’s mind, but rather something Moses himself wished to convey.”<sup>40</sup>

In my previous studies I have shown that Origen as a biblical scholar applied the Alexandrian philological tradition of Homeric studies to his biblical exegetical method, to read and understand a biblical passage using other biblical passages.<sup>41</sup> My first point is that Origen understands the study of scripture to mean the study of the whole of scripture. He was the first to draw attention to certain books of Wisdom (Ecclesiastes and Job) and his exegesis of Joshua and Judges has remained almost unparalleled in early exegetical literature.<sup>42</sup> As Manlio Simonetti stresses, “no one before him had made a commentary in any systematic way on an entire book either of the Old Testament or the New Testament.”<sup>43</sup>

My second point is that the Pauline epistles had a great influence on his exegetical method of dealing with the scriptures. Origen characterises his inquiry into the deeper meaning of the biblical passage based on the Pauline term ἀλληγορούμενα from Galatians 4:24 in contrast to the allegory used outside Christianity. In the *Peri archon* 4.2.6 (in the Latin version), Origen unfolded his exegetical method in detail as follows:

And when writing to the Galatians and reproaching some who believe they are reading the law and yet do not understand it, because they are unaware that there are allegories in these writings, he addresses them in a tone of rebuke: “Tell me, you that desire to be under the law, do ye not hear the law? For it is written that Abraham had two sons, one by the handmaid and one by the free woman. Howbeit he who was born of the

39 Maren R. Niehoff, *Jewish Exegesis and Homeric Scholarship in Alexandria* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 128–29.

40 *Ibid.*, 134.

41 Miyako Demura, “Origen’s Allegorical Interpretation and the Philological Tradition of Alexandria,” in *Origeniana Nona: Origen and the Religious Practice of His Time*, ed. G. Heidl and R. Somos, BETL, vol. 228 (Leuven: Peeters, 2009), 149–58.

42 See Bruce M. Metzger, *The Canon of the New Testament: Its Origin, Development, and Significance* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1987).

43 Manlio Simonetti, *Biblical Interpretation in the Early Church: A Historical Introduction to Patristic Exegesis*, trans. J.A. Hughes (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1994), 40.

handmaid was born according to the flesh, but he of the free woman was born according to promise, which things contain an allegory. For these are the two covenants' (Gal 4:21–24).<sup>44</sup>

It is important to note that Origen already had adopted the Homeric philological method (Homer should be interpreted from Homer) when he composed his *Hexapla* in Alexandria and he developed his allegorical interpretation based on the Alexandrian philological method (scripture should be interpreted from scripture) to make refutation against allegories of Greek philosophers and Gnostics of his time which had been developed as a philosophical interpretative method of ancient myth.<sup>45</sup> We focus next on a few examples of Origen's interpretations from such a philological background.

## 5 Origen's Polemics and his Reception of the Pauline Letters

### 5.1 *Origen's Polemic against Gnostic Interpretations*

Although Epiphanius enumerated a Gnostic heretical tendency in Origen's allegorical interpretations, it is a fact that his main motivation in *Peri archon* was to respond to Gnostic heresies (Valentinus, Marcion, and Basilides as major opponents), as Crouzel and Simonetti point out.<sup>46</sup> According to Simonetti, it is necessary to take the cultural predominance of the Gnostics, "who interpreted the Old Testament in such a way as to underline the hiatus which separates it from the New Testament, and on the other hand, interpreted the New Testament by distorting its meaning in order to confirm the basic teachings of

44 Origen, *De princ.* 4.2.6 (sc 268.322–24): "Ad Galatas uero scribens et uelut exprobrans quibusdam, qui uidentur sibi legere legem nec tamen intellegunt eam, pro eo quod allegorias esse in his quae scripta sunt ignorant, ita cum increpatione quadam ait ad eos: Dicit mihi uos, qui sub lege uultis esse, legem non audistis? Scriptum est enim quia Abraham duos filios habuit, unum ex ancilla et unum de libera. Sed ille quidem, qui de ancilla natus est, secundum carnem natus est, qui uero de libera, secundum repromissionem: quae sunt allegorica. Haec enim sunt duo testamenta, et reliqua." See Miyako Demura, "Origen as Biblical Scholar in his Commentary on the Gospel according to Matthew XII,29," *Scrinium* 4 (2008): 23–31; and eadem, "The Reception of the Pauline Letters and the Formation of the Canonical Principle in Origen of Alexandria," *Scrinium* 6 (2010): 75–84.

45 Demura, "Origen's Allegorical Interpretation," 153.

46 Henri Crouzel and Manlio Simonetti, eds, *Origène. Traité des principes*, t. 1, SC, vol. 252 (Paris: Éditions du Cerf, 1978), 36–40.

the Gnostics.<sup>47</sup> Origen uses allegorical interpretation in various critical ways as follows. When he criticises the unlimited use of allegory by Gnostics, in one case he tries to refute the excessive allegorisation of the Gnostics by means of making the connection between the letter and the spirit of the sacred text, and in the other case he tries to reproach them for the literalism, and hence over-simplicity.<sup>48</sup>

In this respect we can recognise in his *Commentarii in Iohannem* 13.10–11 that Origen criticises the Gnostic interpretations of Heracleon on the Samaritan woman at the well in John 4:1–26, emphasising mainly his arbitrary citations of the gospel texts.

(65) And I do not know how Heracleon, by taking note of what has not been written, says on the statement, “Give me this water,” that, therefore, when the Samaritan woman had been pricked a little by his word, she hated henceforth even the place of the so-called living water.

(68) But here he clearly distorts the text when he says that the Savior said to her, “*Call your husband and come here,*” meaning her consort from the pleroma.

(71) We have read: “You have had five husbands,” but in Heracleon we have found: *You have had six husbands.*<sup>49</sup>

Rowan Williams shows clearly and persuasively the intention of Origen in his *Commentarii in Iohannem*, which is the reason why Origen became susceptible to heresy afterwards.<sup>50</sup> For Origen, “the spiritual exegete’s work is fundamental

47 Simonetti, *Biblical Interpretation*, 39–42. On 34, he writes: “The initiative was thus parallel to that undertaken much earlier by Philo and other Hellenised Jews, but now the immediate goal was to oppose the cultural predominance of the Gnostics and their interpretation of Scripture.”

48 Origen, *Comm. in Ioh.* 13.9 and 20.20 (SC 222.58–63 and 290.236–41); idem, *De princ.* 4.2.9 and 4.3.4 (SC 268.334–41 and 356–61); and idem, *Comm. in Ioh.* 13.41, 53, and 60 (SC 222.176–79, 228–35, and 262–67).

49 Origen, *Comm. in Ioh.* 13.10–11): Οὐκ οἶδα δὲ πῶς ὁ Ἡρακλέων τὸ μὴ γεγραμμένον ἐκλαβὼν φησι πρὸς τὸ <<Δός μοι τοῦτο τὸ ὕδωρ>> ὡς ἄρα βραχέα διανυχθεῖσα ὑπὸ τοῦ λόγου ἐμίσησεν λοιπὸν καὶ τὸν τόπον ἐκείνου τοῦ λεγομένου ζῶντος ὕδατος . . . Προδήλως δὲ ἐνταῦθα βιάζεται, λέγων αὐτῇ τὸν σωτῆρα εἰρηκέναι <<Φώνησόν σου τὸν ἄνδρα καὶ ἐλθέ ἐνθάδε>>, δηλοῦντα τὸν ἀπὸ τοῦ πληρώματος σύζυγον . . . Ἡμεῖς μὲν οὖν ἀνέγνωμεν <<Πέντε ἄνδρας ἔσχες>> παρὰ δὲ τῷ Ἡρακλέωνι εὗρομεν <<Ἐξ ἄνδρας ἔσχες>>

50 Rowan D. Williams, “Origen: Between Orthodoxy and Heresy,” in *Origeniana Septima: Origines in den Auseinandersetzungen des 4. Jahrhunderts*, ed. W.A. Bienert and U. Kühneweg, BETL, vol. 137 (Leuven: Peeters, 1999), 3–14.

to the Church's unity. Without the exegete, there is no solid demonstration of the unity of the Scripture; interpretation is not illustrative of doctrine, but the very foundation of doctrine."<sup>51</sup> But afterwards he adds that if one were to

transpose this to a setting in which institutional reinforcements of unity are immeasurably more powerful, . . . it is not surprising that Origen's version of what guarantees the unity of an orthodox discourse is barely intelligible. Some of this has to do with what I have elsewhere described as the triumph of a 'Catholic' over an 'Academic' style of church life.<sup>52</sup>

In my view, it is important to note that Origen as a biblical scholar, attached great importance to keeping the original scriptural text handed down to him as the canon, and put a brake on unlimited speculative interpretations as found in Heracleon's interpretations of John's Gospel.

### 5.2 *Origen's Polemic against Ebionites*

Another factor that advanced Origen's biblical interpretation can be explained on the basis of his confrontation with the Jewish communities living in Caesarea at that time. In *Peri archon* 4.3.8, Origen introduces the problem of biblical exegesis by a sect of Jewish Christians called the Ebionites as follows:

Now that we have learned from him [Paul], therefore, that there is one Israel according to the flesh and another according to the spirit, then when the Savior says, 'I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel' (Mt 15: 24), we do not take these words in the same sense as do they who 'mind earthly things,' that is, the Ebionites, who even by their very name are called poor (for in Hebrew the word *ebion* means poor), but we understand that it is a race of souls which is called Israel, as the meaning of the word itself indicates; for Israel means 'the mind seeing God' or 'man seeing God.'<sup>53</sup>

---

51 *Ibid.*, 7.

52 *Ibid.*, 10.

53 Origen, *De princ.* 4.3.8 (SC 268.368–71): "Edocti igitur ab eo quia sit alius Israhel secundum carnem, et alius secundum spiritum, cum dicit saluator quia non sum missus nisi ad oues perditas domus Israhel, non ita accipimus sicut hi, qui terrena sapient, id est Hebionitae, qui etiam ipso nomine pauperes appellantur (Hebion namque pauper apud Hebraeos interpretaetur), sed intellegimus genus esse animarum, quae Israhel nominantur, secundum quod et nominis ipsius designat interpretaatio : Israhel namque mens uidens deum uel homo uidens deum interpretaetur."

The Ebionites were a sect of Jewish Christians, who kept the Jewish law. Their name indicates that they practised, at least originally, a voluntary poverty and simplicity of life, such as described in Acts 2: 44–45, but with no reference whatever to poverty of mind, as Origen declares.<sup>54</sup> Concerning the problem of Origen's personal contact with Jewish Christians like the Ebionites in his Alexandrian Christian community, Adele Monaci Castagno speculates from Origen's *In Genesim homiliae XVI* 3.4 and *Homiliae Ieremiam* 19.12 that "they certainly included some Ebionites, but these must have been rather few in number."<sup>55</sup> And Sakari Häkkinen remarks that, "Unlike Irenaeus and the church fathers who followed him, Origen also seems to have had personal acquaintance with Jewish Christians, whom he called Ebionites."<sup>56</sup> If it was so, Origen's testimony could be regarded as one of the most important sources about Jewish Christians in Egypt.

It is noteworthy that this passage was introduced by Origen in the context of the Pauline understanding of two kinds of Israel; one is a literal meaning (Israel according to the flesh) and another is a spiritual meaning (Israel according to the spirit). On this point, Häkkinen raises the possibility that Origen might have called all Jewish Christians Ebionites.<sup>57</sup> And Heine points out that Origen moves beyond Paul's examples and applies his principle to other key people and places mentioned in the Bible.<sup>58</sup>

### 5.3 *Reception of the Pauline Letters in Early Christianity*

Finally we will survey how the Pauline letters were received in early Christianity in order to answer the question why Origen's exegetical method has suffered from a long-standing hostile criticism. At first we must consider the fact that the Pauline letters were not so influential in second-century Christian writings. Scholars have explained the reason for that in terms of reaction against the appropriation of Paul by the heretical side, i.e. Gnostics and Marcion. When Schneemelcher examined the Pauline influence on the writings of the apostolic fathers and apologists such as Papias of Hierapolis, Justin, Tatian, Athenagorus, Theophilus, and Hegesippus, he concluded plainly that not a single citation or

54 Butterworth, *Origen*, 300, n.1.

55 Adele Monaci Castagno, "Origen the Scholar and Pastor," in *Preacher and Audience: Studies in Early Christian and Byzantine Homiletics*, ed. Mary B. Cunningham and Pauline Allen, *A New History of the Sermon*, vol. 1, trans. Frances Cooper (Leiden: Brill, 1998), 65–87.

56 Sakari Häkkinen, "Ebionites," in *A Companion to Second-Century Christian Heretics*, ed. Antti Marjanen and Petri Luomenen, *VCSupp*, vol. 76 (Leiden: Brill, 2005), 254.

57 *Ibid.*

58 Heine, *Origen*, 125.



reference to the Pauline letters in them played a theologically important role because of their appropriation by the heretical side.<sup>59</sup> And Campenhausen shows that the evaluation of Paul during the second-century had been drastically underestimated because of the exclusive favoritism towards him among heretical groups, like the Marcionites and other sects, and as a result, Paul had been disregarded entirely within devout orthodox circles.<sup>60</sup>

According to Babcock, Paul's theology had been generally ignored or misconstrued before Augustine because Pauline theology exercised its greatest appeal among marginal or heretical sides.<sup>61</sup> In this current, Origen seemed to hold a unique position, because before him exegetes preferred to concentrate on a few Old Testament books (Genesis, Exodus, Psalms, Isaiah, and little else), and systematically only on parts of these. On the New Testament, the object of study was almost solely Matthew, certain letters of Paul, and in a millenarian milieu, Revelation.

Origen, by contrast, understood the study of scripture to mean the study of the whole of scripture. He was the first to draw attention to certain books of wisdom literature (Ecclesiastes and Job); his exegesis of Joshua and Judges has remained almost unparalleled in early exegetical literature.<sup>62</sup> As Manlio Simonetti stresses, "no one before him had made a commentary in any systematic way on an entire book either of the Old Testament or the New Testament," and Christoph Marksches asserts Origen's 'Paulinism' and states that, "Origen endeavored to understand Paul in the framework of the whole Bible (especially of the Old Testament) in an inclusively 'Canonical reading.'"<sup>63</sup> Origen not only undertook to make a commentary on an entire biblical book, but, as we already noted, Pauline ἀλληγορούμενα in Galatians 4:24 had great influence on his exegetical method.

---

59 Wilhelm Schneemelcher, "Paulus in der griechischen Kirche des zweiten Jahrhunderts," *ZKG* 75 (1964): 1–20.

60 Hans von Campenhausen, *The Formation of the Christian Bible* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1972), 177–78; see contra, e.g., Dassmann, *Der Stachel im Fleisch*, 174ff, 318.

61 William S. Babcock, ed., *Paul and the Legacies of Paul* (Dallas: Southern Methodist University Press, 1990), ix–xxviii. See. Charles Kannengiesser, *Handbook of Patristic Exegesis: The Bible of Ancient Christianity*, vol. 1 (Leiden: Brill, 2004), 354–61.

62 See Metzger, *The Canon of the New Testament*, 135–41.

63 C. Marksches, "Paul the Apostle," in *The Westminster Handbook to Origen*, ed. John Anthony McGuckin, *The Westminster Handbooks to Christian Theology* (London: John Knox Press, 2004), 167–69.



## 6 Conclusion

From these considerations, we can see Origen as a biblical exegete, tackling the theological problems which had threatened the identity of the early church, and evaluate Origen's theological legacy with regard to subsequent church history. Origen's exegetical method allows a wide range of biblical interpretation, in so far as one interprets one biblical text on the basis of another biblical passage. McGuckin formulates Origen's canonical notion as "the idea of a universal system of explaining the inner rationale of a Canon of inspired literature; one that has demonstrable coherence, and can be navigated with a precise 'hermeneutical astrolabe.'"<sup>64</sup> In my view, as a biblical exegete Origen followed the Pauline exegetical precedent and developed his exegetical method resting upon the inner explanation of biblical texts based upon Paul rather than upon Hellenistic-Gnostic speculative thinkers. Yet Origen has been misunderstood rather as a speculative theologian rather than a biblical scholar, as we saw in the accusations of Epiphanius. In fact, Epiphanius criticised Origen as a speculative thinker and regarded him even as the progenitor of Gnostic sects on the basis of only a few partial texts, while neglecting his many biblical works.

But actually Origen shifted the term 'allegory' from the Hellenistic-Gnostic meaning (the method of discovering an author's intention from a source other than the letters written in the text) to the canonical principle based on the Alexandrian philological method (scripture should be interpreted from scripture in so far as it possesses the inner reason). This shift could be inspired by his reception of Pauline theology in the last twenty years of his life, when Origen undertook the composition of his commentaries and homilies,<sup>65</sup> and constructed his theological treatises such as *Contra Celsum* mainly based on Pauline passages.<sup>66</sup>

In this context, Origen's homiletic activities, undertaken as a Christian presbyter-theologian in the later part of his life in Caesarea, are worth referencing.<sup>67</sup> Following practices of Jewish worship, homilies had been prob-

64 J.A. McGuckin, "Origen as Literary Critic in the Alexandrian Tradition," in *Origeniana Octava: Origen and the Alexandrian Tradition*, ed. L. Perrone, BETL, vols 164A and B (Leuven: Peeters, 2003), 125.

65 Origen composed his commentaries on Philemon, Ephesians, Philippians, and Colossians after 233, his homilies on 1 Corinthians around 240, his commentary on Romans in 244, as well as a great number of lost homilies and commentaries.

66 As I have mentioned above, Christoph Marksches pointed out Origen's 'Paulinism' and 'an inclusively canonical reading'.

67 Miyako Demura, "Origen as Biblical Scholar and Preacher in Caesarea," *Scrinium* 9 (2013): 70–78.

ably part of the Christian liturgy from the earliest days. But Origen introduced Christian homilies on the model of Pauline exegesis of the law, so that he tried to separate them from practices in the synagogue because of its rivalry with churches in Caesarea. What's more, Origen moved beyond Paul's examples in time and tried to apply his exegetical principle (scripture should be interpreted from scripture) to an entire book either of the Old Testament or the New Testament.

Lienhard shows that the homily had three characteristics: being liturgical, it belonged to the order of Christian worship; being exegetical, it explained a text from the Bible, God's living word for his people; being prophetic, it demonstrated the significance of the text for the hearers.<sup>68</sup> In his later life, Origen integrated his biblical scholarship into his homiletic activities and advanced liturgical, exegetical, and prophetic elements, so that his legacy remains ubiquitous in later church history.

### Bibliography

- Epiphanius. *Panarion* (Karl Holl and Jürgen Dummer, eds, *Epiphanius Constantiensis. Ancoratus und Panarion haer.*, GCS, Bd 25 (n.F. 10), 31, and 37. Berlin: Akademie-Verlag, 1915–1985. English translation in Frank Williams, *The Panarion of Epiphanius of Salamis: Books II and III [Sects 47–80, De Fide]*, Nag Hammadi and Manichaean Studies, vol. 36, 2nd ed. Leiden: Brill, 2008).
- Eusebius, *Historia ecclesiastica* (Gustave Bardy, ed., *Eusèbe de Césarée. Historia ecclésiastique*, t. 1: *Livres I–IV*, SC, vol. 31. Paris: Éditions du Cerf, 2001).
- Origen. *Commentarii in Iohannem* (C. Blanc, ed., *Origène. Commentaire sur Saint Jean*, SC, vols 120, 157, 222, and 290. Paris: Éditions du Cerf, 1966–1982).
- . *De principiis* (Henri Crouzel and Manlio Simonetti, eds, *Origène. Traité des principes*, SC, vols 252, 253, 268, 269, and 312. Paris: Éditions du Cerf, 1978–1984. English translation in George William Butterworth, *Origen: On First Principles*. London: SPCK, 1936).
- von Campenhausen, Hans. *The Formation of the Christian Bible*. Translated by J.A. Baker. Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1972.
- Clark, Elizabeth A. *The Origenist Controversy: The Cultural Construction of an Early Christian Debate*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1992.
- Crouzel, Henri. *Origen: The Life and Thought of the First Great Theologian*. Translated by A.S. Worrall. Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1989.

68 Joseph T. Lienhard, "Origen as homilist", in *Preaching in the Patristic Age: Studies in Honor of Walter J. Burghardt*, ed. David G. Hunter (New York: Paulist Press, 1989), 36–37.

- Dassmann, Ernst. *Der Stachel im Fleisch: Paulus in der Frühchristlichen Literatur bis Irenäus*. Münster: Aschendorff, 1979.
- Dechow, Jon F. "The Heresy Charges against Origen." In *Origeniana Quarta: Die Referate des 4. Internationalen Origeneskongress*, edited by L. Lies, 112–22. Innsbruck: Tyrolia-Verlag, 1987.
- . *Dogma and Mysticism in Early Christianity: Epiphanius of Cyprus and the Legacy of Origen*, Patristic Monograph Series, vol. 13. Macon, Ga: Mercer University Press, 1988.
- Demura, Miyako. "The Resurrection of the Body and Soul in Origen's *Contra Celsum*." In *Studia Patristica*, vol. 18/3, edited by Elizabeth A. Livingstone, papers presented at the 9th International Conference on Patristic Studies, Oxford 1983, 375–81. Leuven: Peeters, 1990.
- . "The Biblical Tradition of Resurrection in Early Christianity: Pauline Influence on Origen's Theology of Resurrection." *Annual of the Japanese Biblical Institute* 25/26 (1999/2000): 135–51.
- . "Origen as Biblical Scholar in his Commentary on the Gospel according to Matthew XI,29." *Scrinium* 4 (2008): 23–31.
- . "Origen's Allegorical Interpretation and the Philological Tradition of Alexandria." In *Origeniana Nona: Origen and the Religious Practice of His Time*, edited by G. Heidl and R. Somos, BETL, vol. 228, 149–58. Leuven: Peeters, 2009.
- . "The Reception of the Pauline Letters and the Formation of the Canonical Principle in Origen of Alexandria." *Scrinium* 6 (2010): 75–84.
- . "Origen as Biblical Scholar and Preacher in Caesarea." *Scrinium* 9 (2013): 70–78.
- van Eijk, A.H.C. "'Only That Can Rise Which Has Previously Fallen': The History of a Formula." *JTS* n.s. 22 (1971): 517–29.
- Fürst, Alfons. *Von Origenes und Hieronymus zu Augustinus: Studien zur antiken Theologiegeschichte*, AKG, Bd 115. Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2011.
- Guillaumont, A. *Les 'Kephalaia gnostica' d'Évagre le Pontique et l'histoire de l'Origenisme chez les Grecs et chez les Syriens*, Patristica Sorbonensia, vol. 5. Paris: Éditions du Seuil, 1962.
- Häkkinen, Sakari. "Ebionites." In *A Companion to Second-Century Christian Heretics*, edited by Antti Marjanen and Petri Luomenen, VCSupp, vol. 76, 247–78. Leiden: Brill, 2005.
- Heine, Ronald E. *Origen: Scholarship in the Service of the Church*, Christian Theology in Context. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010.
- Kannegiesser, Charles. *Handbook of Patristic Exegesis: The Bible of Ancient Christianity*, 2 vols. Leiden: Brill, 2004.

- Kannengiesser, Charles, and William L. Petersen, eds. *Origen of Alexandria: His World and His Legacy*, Christianity and Judaism in Antiquity, vol. 1. Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1988.
- Lienhard, Joseph A. "Origen as Homilist." In *Preaching in the Patristic Age: Studies in Honor of Walter J. Burghardt*, edited by David G. Hunter, 3–52. New York: Paulist Press, 1989.
- Lyman, J. Rebecca. "The Making of a Heretic: The Life of Origen in Epiphanius *Panarion* 64." In *Studia Patristica*, vol. 31, edited by Elizabeth A. Livingstone, papers presented at the 12th International Conference on Patristic Studies, Oxford 1995, 445–51. Leuven: Peeters, 1997.
- McGuckin, J.A. "Origen as Literary Critic in the Alexandrian Tradition." In *Origeniana Octava: Origen and the Alexandrian Tradition*, edited by L. Perrone, BETL, vols 164A and B, 121–35. Leuven: Peeters, 2003.
- Markschies, C. "Paul the Apostle." In *The Westminster Handbook to Origen*, edited by John Anthony McGuckin, The Westminster Handbooks to Christian Theology, 167–69. London: John Knox Press, 2004.
- Metzger, Bruce M. *The Canon of the New Testament: Its Origin, Development, and Significance*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1987.
- Monaci Castagno, Adele. "Origen the Scholar and Pastor." In *Preacher and Audience: Studies in Early Christian and Byzantine Homiletics*, edited by Mary B. Cunningham and Pauline Allen, A New History of the Sermon, vol. 1, 65–87, Leiden: Brill, 1998.
- Niehoff, Maren R. *Jewish Exegesis and Homeric Scholarship in Alexandria*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011.
- Ritter, A.M. "De Polycarpe à Clément aux origines d'Alexandrie chrétienne." In *Ἀλεξάνδρεια: Hellenisme, judaïsme et christianisme à Alexandrie: Mélanges offerts au P. Claude Mondésert*, Patrimoines, 151–72. Paris: Éditions du Cerf, 1987.
- Rubenson, Samuel. "Origen in the Egyptian Monastic Tradition of the Fourth Century." In *Origeniana Septima: Origenes in den Auseinandersetzungen des 4. Jahrhunderts*, edited by W.A. Bienert and U. Kühneweg, BETL, vol. 137, 310–37. Leuven: Peeters, 1999.
- Schneemelcher, Wilhelm. "Paulus in der griechischen Kirche des zweiten Jahrhunderts." *ZKG* 75 (1964): 1–20.
- Simonetti, Manlio. *Biblical Interpretation in the Early Church: A Historical Introduction to Patristic Exegesis*. Translated by J.A. Hughes. Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1994.
- Williams, Rowan D. "Origen: Between Orthodoxy and Heresy." In *Origeniana Septima: Origenes in den Auseinandersetzungen des 4. Jahrhunderts*, edited by W.A. Bienert and U. Kühneweg, BETL, vol. 137, 3–14. Leuven: Peeters, 1999.

# Shaping the Sick Soul: Reshaping the Identity of John Chrysostom

Wendy Mayer

## 1 John Viewed through the Lens of Theology

If we reflect on the array of influences that have shaped our view of John Chrysostom over the centuries, the realm of theology and theological concerns have from the very beginning constituted a consistent, if not major, component. By the time that he died in 407 CE a number of works attributed to John were in circulation, which had been authored or doctored by parties on both sides of the growing Johannite—anti-Johannite divide.<sup>1</sup> While recent scholarship identifies the roots of this schism as largely church-political and administrative,<sup>2</sup> at the time John's deposition was carefully cast within an Origenist framework by opponents and supporters alike.<sup>3</sup> If Origenism was not

1 See Sever Voicu, "La volontà e il caso: La tipologia dei primi spuri di Crisostomo," in *Giovanni Crisostomo: Oriente e Occidente tra IV e V secolo*, xxxiii Incontro di studiosi dell'antichità Cristiana, Roma, 6–8 maggio 2004, SEAug, vol. 93 (Rome: Institutum Patristicum Augustinianum, 2005), 101–18; and Wendy Mayer, "Media Manipulation as a Tool in Religious Conflict: Controlling the Narrative Surrounding the Deposition of John Chrysostom," in *Religious Conflict from Early Christianity to the Rise of Islam*, ed. Wendy Mayer and Bronwen Neil, AKG, Bd 121 (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2013), 151–68, esp. 164–66, where it is argued that a number of sermons circulated under John's name deliberately construct the Johannite party as the persecuted orthodox church.

2 See J.H.W.G. Liebeschuetz, "The Fall of John Chrysostom," *Nottingham Medieval Studies* 29 (1985): 1–31; Susanna Elm, "The Dog that did not Bark: Doctrine and Patriarchal Authority in the Conflict between Theophilus of Alexandria and John Chrysostom of Constantinople," in *Christian Origins: Theology, Rhetoric and Community*, ed. L. Ayres and G. Jones (London: Routledge, 1998), 66–93; and Claudia Tiersch, *Johannes Chrysostomus in Konstantinopel (398–404). Weltsicht und Wirken eines Bischofs in der Hauptstadt des Oströmischen Reiches*, STAC, Bd 6 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2002).

3 So Palladius, *Dial.* 6–8 (SC 341.130–72), who adduces the Origenist issue to put a pro-John anti-Theophilus spin on events. For the exploitation of the same approach by the opposition with different intent see Jerome, *Ep.* 113 (CSEL 55.393–94), a Latin translation of a letter received from Theophilus in 405 in which Theophilus lists among John's misdeeds the latter's support for the Origenists. For discussion of both approaches see Demetrios Katos,

being adduced to muddy the waters, John was being cast by his supporters as the champion against Arianism of the neo-Nicene (orthodox) faith.<sup>4</sup> This phenomenon did not end with John's rehabilitation and the ultimate resolution of the Johannite—anti-Johannite dispute in 438 CE. Theological interests across a diverse spectrum proceeded to claim John for their own and to thus exert a substantial influence on how John was viewed in the centuries that immediately followed.<sup>5</sup> A similar plasticity in the interpretation of John's theology in the service of contemporary interests again came into play at the time of the Reformation and Counter-Reformation.<sup>6</sup> The way in which John was viewed in

---

*Palladius of Helenopolis: The Origenist Advocate*, O ECS (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011); Peter Van Nuffelen, "Palladius and the Johannite Schism," *JEH* 64 (2013): 1–19; and idem, "Theophilus against John Chrysostom: The Fragments of a Lost *liber* and the Reasons for John's Deposition," *Adamantius* 19 (2013): 138–55.

- 4 This is a key image in the *Oratio funebris* of ps-Martyrius, and is later adopted by the ecclesiastical historians Sozomen and Theodoret in their framing of the Gainas episode. See Wendy Mayer, "The Making of a Saint: John Chrysostom in Early Historiography," in *Chrysostomosbilder in 1600 Jahren: Facetten der Wirkungsgeschichte eines Kirchenvaters*, ed. M. Wallraff and R. Brändle, AKG, Bd 105 (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2008), 39–59. Independently, certain of John's writings were simultaneously (414–421 CE) being adduced in support of a Pelagianist, Julianist, or Catholic position by western Christian writers. See Guillaume Bady, "Les traductions latines anciennes de Jean Chrysostome: motifs et paradoxes," in *L'Antiquité tardive dans les collections médiévales: textes et représentations, VI<sup>e</sup>–XIV<sup>e</sup> siècle*, ed. Stéphane Gioanni and Benoît Grévin, CEFR, vol. 405 (Rome: L'École française de Rome, 2008), 31–12.
- 5 See e.g., in the eighth century John of Damascus, *Encom. in s. Ioh. Chrys.* (PTS 29.359–70), where John again is adduced as a champion of orthodoxy. For appeals to John's writings in the sixth to ninth centuries viewed against the background of the various theological disputes see Chrysostomus Baur, *S. Jean Chrysostome et ses œuvres dans l'histoire littéraire*, Recueil de travaux publiés par les membres des conférences d'histoire et de philologie, 18<sup>e</sup> Fascicule (Louvain: Bureaux du Recueil and Paris: Albert Fontemoing, 1907), 13–23. See also Jeffrey W. Childers, "Chrysostom in Syriac Dress," in *Studia Patristica*, vol. 67, ed. Markus Vinzent, papers presented at the 16th International Conference on Patristic Studies, Oxford 2011 (Leuven: Peeters, 2013), 326, who points out that it was John's own "tendency to focus on pragmatics rather than finely nuanced theological discussion [that ensured] for him a place across the theological spectrum—miaphysite, diaphysite, and Chalcedonian."
- 6 Apologetic appeal to "Chrysostom" in polemics of this period on both sides of the Catholic—Protestant divide survives in pamphlets such as Columbanus Vrancx's *Malleus Cabvinistarum* (Antwerp: Apud Ioannem Keerbergium, 1590) and those produced in the 1680s during a local dispute between Johan Friedrich Mayer and two Jesuit preachers in Germany in which his theology was claimed respectively as Lutheran and Catholic. On the latter see Baur, *S. Jean Chrysostome*, 280–81.

the nineteenth century continued to follow in this path, with a post-Reformation lens often being employed in the shaping of his biography and identity.<sup>7</sup>

To the present day John has continued to be viewed through a theological lens, with, in more recent times, quite negative results. As David Rylaarsdam points out, the twentieth century was not kind to Chrysostom, with Georges Florovsky claiming that he was an orator, “not a thinker or philosopher;” Rowan Greer labelling him “anti-intellectual;” Manlio Simonetti, despite John’s vast exegetical output, devoting to him just a single paragraph in a 500-page book on Greek patristic exegesis, in which he described John’s exegetical work as “rigorously literal,” “superficial,” and “deficient;” Frances Young arguing that he “popularized rather than contributed to theology;” and other scholars that he was a mere “moraliser” rather than a “serious theologian.”<sup>8</sup> Even in the realm of Christian ethics, Rylaarsdam points out, John has been dismissed by some “as exhibiting a ‘distressing poverty’ of spiritual depth.”<sup>9</sup> These views of John as a theological (and even exegetical) lightweight emerged from a century dominated by a high valuation of systematic theology and an approach towards the discipline of patristics/patrolology that privileged the focused theological writings of certain ‘major’ fathers of the church.<sup>10</sup> From such a standpoint John Chrysostom, who is one of the most prolific and widely transmitted patristic

---

7 See e.g., William Richard Wood Stephens, *Saint John Chrysostom. His Life and Times: A Sketch of the Church and the Empire in the Fourth Century*, 2nd ed. (London: J. Murray, 1880). Stephens, writing on John’s theology, looks for the Anglicanism in it. For other Anglican approaches see Robert Wheler Bush, *The Life and Times of Chrysostom* (London: The Religious Tract Society, 1885); and anon., “Chrysostom,” *The British Quarterly Review* 48 (1868): 377–414. Cf. Frederic Matthaëus Perthes, *Des Bischofs Johannes Chrysostomus Leben nach den Forschungen Neanders, Böhringers und anderer für die Familie unserer Tage dargestellt* (Hamburg and Gotha: F. & A. Perthes, 1853), written for the edification of Protestant families. Theodor Förster, *Chrysostomus in seinem Verhältnis zur antiochenischen Schule. Ein Beitrag zur Dogmengeschichte* (Gotha: F. & A. Perthes, 1869), in his assessment of John’s theology against that of Origen and Theodore of Mopsuestia, reads this from a post-Reformation perspective. So John’s understanding of original sin is not that of Luther’s, while on the question of faith and good works John is half-Protestant, half-Catholic. In this regard he follows in the footsteps of August Neander, *Der heilige Johannes Chrysostomus und die Kirche, besonders des Orients, in dessen Zeitalter*, 2 vols, 3rd ed. (Berlin: Ferd. Dümmler’s Buchhandlung, 1848–1849), who writes less a biography than an analysis of John’s dogmatic position from a Protestant perspective.

8 David Rylaarsdam, *John Chrysostom on Divine Pedagogy: The Coherence of His Theology and Preaching*, OBCS (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), 2 and nn.9–14.

9 *Ibid.*, 3.

10 See John A. McGuckin, “Patristics,” “Patrolology,” in *idem*, *The Westminster Handbook to Patristic Theology* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2004), 252–54.



authors to the present day, but wrote not a single treatise that could be categorised as theological in modern terms, could scarcely have hoped to compete.

## 2 Not [...] <sup>11</sup>Theologian, but Medico-Philosophical Psychic Therapist

In the second decade of the twenty-first century a plethora of studies are in the process of overturning these points of view. As is increasingly being shown, the dichotomy ‘moralist’—‘theologian’ is for the fourth century invalid,<sup>12</sup> while the production of scriptural exegesis in the early centuries of Christianity cannot be narrowly constrained or defined since it is directed towards a variety of models of the Christian life, on the one hand,<sup>13</sup> and is now seen as less easily categorised, on the other.<sup>14</sup> Contrary to expectation, Chrysostom in fact offers a coherent theology that both drives his preaching and, through the vehicle of that same preaching (and exegesis), addresses the Christian’s whole person,

---

11 Supply appropriate adjective.

12 So Susanna Elm, *Sons of Hellenism, Fathers of the Church: Emperor Julian, Gregory of Nazianzus and the Vision of Rome*, TCH, vol. 49 (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2012), points out that it was the neo-pagan philosophy and policies of Julian (361–363 CE) that prompted the beginnings of a more formal approach to defining Christian doctrine, while at the same time the approaches of Julian and of Gregory of Nazianzus to the virtue formation of the human being were markedly similar. It is not until the beginnings of the fifth century that the first treatises that systematise Christian beliefs began to appear. On the latter point see Jörg Ulrich, “The Reception of Greek Christian Apologetics in Theodoretus’ *Graecarum affectionum curatio*,” in *Continuity and Discontinuity in Early Christian Apologetics*, ed. J. Ulrich, A.-C. Jacobsen, and M. Kahlos, *Early Christianity in the Context of Antiquity*, vol. 5 (Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 2009), 127.

13 See e.g., Elizabeth A. Clark, *Reading Renunciation: Asceticism and Scripture in Early Christianity* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1999); and the essays in Hans-Ulrich Weidemann, ed., *Asceticism and Exegesis in Early Christianity: The Reception of New Testament Texts in Ancient Ascetic Discourses*, *Novum Testamentum et Orbis Antiquus*, vol. 101 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2013).

14 See e.g., on less discrete boundaries between Jewish and Christian exegesis, Gary A. Anderson, Ruth A. Clements, and David Satran, eds, *New Approaches to the Study of Biblical Interpretation in Judaism of the Second Temple Period and in Early Christianity*, *Studies on the Texts of the Desert of Judah*, vol. 106 (Leiden: Brill, 2013); and Emmanouela Grypeou and Helen Spurling, *The Book of Genesis in Late Antiquity: Encounters between Jewish and Christian Exegesis*, *Jewish and Christian Perspectives Series*, vol. 24 (Leiden: Brill, 2013); and between the traditional categories ‘Antiochene’ (= literal) and ‘Alexandrian’ (= allegorical) exegesis, Donald Fairbairn, “Patristic Exegesis and Theology: The Cart and the Horse,” *WTJ* 69 (2007): 1–19.



their salvation, and the human person's relationship with and to God. Building on the work of Margaret Mitchell,<sup>15</sup> this is the persuasive argument of David Rylaarsdam's new book,<sup>16</sup> a thesis supported by the recent work of Paraskeve Tatse,<sup>17</sup> Pak-Wah Lai,<sup>18</sup> Andreas Heiser,<sup>19</sup> and now Demetrios Tonia<sup>20</sup> on Chrysostom's employment of a range of biblical virtue exemplars as models for the Christian life. Indeed, as Ray Laird has recently argued, in his human anthropology John Chrysostom anticipates in eastern Christian thought the concept of the mindset as the faculty responsible for moral error (that is, sin) some three centuries earlier than the assumed originator of this key theological idea, Maximus the Confessor.<sup>21</sup> As this newly emergent repositioning of John within the history of ideas suggests, when we view John's writings and thought in the context of the intellectual and social world in which he was raised, it becomes clear that it is not only mistaken to require of him a theological approach that conforms to the demands of modern systematic theology, but that, as Rylaarsdam in particular demonstrates, John's Christian thought is across the almost three decades of his ecclesiastical career coherent and remarkably consistent. What I would like to propose in this essay is that we should push this research one step further. That is, John's approach is best understood and its value most evident, if we reject the term 'theology' as a modern, etic construct, in favour of applying to his thought the label '(Christian) philosophy'.<sup>22</sup> It is when we view John's approach to the Christian

- 
- 15 Margaret M. Mitchell, *The Heavenly Trumpet: John Chrysostom and the Art of Pauline Interpretation*, Hermeneutische Untersuchungen zur Theologie, Bd 40 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2000).
- 16 Rylaarsdam, *Divine Pedagogy*.
- 17 Paraskeve Tatse, "Ο Απόστολος Παύλος κατά τον Άγιο Ιωάννη Χρυσόστομο" (PhD diss., Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, 2008).
- 18 Pak-Wah Lai, "John Chrysostom and the Hermeneutics of Exemplar Portraits" (PhD diss., Durham University, 2010).
- 19 Andreas Heiser, *Die Paulusinszenierung des Johannes Chrysostomus. Epitheta und ihre Vorgeschichte*, STAC, Bd 70 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2012).
- 20 Demetrios Tonia, *Abraham in the Works of John Chrysostom*, Emerging Scholars Series (Minneapolis, Minn.: Fortress Press, 2014).
- 21 Raymond Laird, *Mindset, Moral Choice and Sin in the Anthropology of John Chrysostom*, ECS, vol. 15 (Strathfield, N.S.W.: St Pauls Publications, 2012).
- 22 Here I beg to differ from Rylaarsdam, *Divine Pedagogy*, 5, who continues to view John from within the discipline of theology ("The theology of Chrysostom's homilies exhibits his creative adjustment of the pedagogical categories of philosophical rhetoric in order to depict the character and economy of God"), an approach in line with that of other recent scholarship. See e.g., Charles Kannengiesser, "‘Clothed with Spiritual Fire’: John Chrysostom's Homilies on the Letter to Hebrews," in *Christology, Hermeneutics, and*

life within the context of the Hellenistic *paideia* within which via the schools of Antioch he was immersed, that we begin to fully appreciate a pedagogical approach that runs through his treatises, homilies, and letters from the beginning of his ecclesiastical career up to his death in exile. For John, I would argue, theology as a distinct intellectual exercise does not appear on his horizon. From his own (emic) point of view he is a psychagogue in the classical sense, a teacher of his own (albeit Christian) philosophical school.<sup>23</sup> This best explains why John commonly uses the terms *didaskalos* and *logos* when he refers to the priest, himself included, in the role of preacher.<sup>24</sup> Like philosophers in the psychagogic stream, his goal is the health of his students' souls<sup>25</sup> and he is best viewed, as I will argue, not within the context of the emergence at the end of the fourth century of systematised discussion of Christian doctrine, but within the already lengthy trajectory of a particular strand of moral philosophy that became formalised within the Hellenistic and early Roman imperial periods as medico-philosophical psychic therapy.<sup>26</sup>

---

*Hebrews: Profiles from the History of Interpretation*, ed. J.C. Laansma and D.J. Trieier, LNTS, vol. 423 (London: T & T Clark, 2012), 82: "John Chrysostom became the creator of a new quality of theology . . . completely non-academic, entirely invested in the social emergencies of his time." In the discussion that follows I employ 'philosophy' in the sense of what was defined in the ancient world as moral/popular/ethical philosophy, that is, philosophy as a way of life.

- 23 The recognition that many Christian preachers of the third and fourth centuries viewed themselves as sophists and teachers of philosophy goes back to Edwin Hatch, *The Influence of Greek Ideas and Usages upon the Christian Church*, ed. A.M. Fairbairn (London: Williams and Norgate, 1890), 107–109. Largely forgotten during the twentieth century, this insight has recently been revived and expanded upon by Jacqueline Maxwell, *Christianization and Communication in Late Antiquity: John Chrysostom and his Congregation in Antioch* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 11–64.
- 24 See e.g., John Chrysostom, *In illud: Messis quidem multa* (PG 63.517.13–17); idem, *Laus Diodori* (PG 52.761.1–4); idem, *Quales ducendae sint uxores* (PG 51.225.17–20); and idem, *De s. Phoca* (PG 50.706.8).
- 25 See John Chrysostom, *In illud: Ne tim. hom. 1* (PG 55.503.1–9), where he says that as διδάσκαλος he is concerned with the treating of both his audience's and his own soul; and idem, *In Titum hom. 2* (PG 62.672.52–55) where in elaborating on Paul's admonitions in Titus he says that the priest is a doctor of souls (Ἱατρός ἐστὶν ὁ διδάσκαλος τῶν ψυχῶν).
- 26 To some degree Anne-Marie Malingrey, "Philosophia": *Étude d'un groupe de mots dans la littérature grecque, des Présocratiques au IV<sup>e</sup> siècle après J.C.*, *Études et Commentaires*, vol. 40 (Paris: Librairie C. Klincksieck, 1961), esp. 263–88, anticipated this approach, although she continued to view his philosophical and theological ideas as inseparable. See eadem, "Résonances stoïciennes dans l'œuvre de Jean Chrysostome," *Diotima. Revue de recherche philosophique* 7 (1979): 116–21; and eadem, "Saint Jean Chrysostome moraliste?," in

### 3 The Path to that Conclusion

A number of scholars around the world have been converging on this insight in the last couple of years independently of each other and from a variety of angles. For my own part I owe a considerable debt to H el ene Perdicoyanni-Pal eologou, who prompted me to research the concept of madness in the thought of John Chrysostom for a book on madness in Greek thought from Homer to the end of the Byzantine period.<sup>27</sup> It was as I was conducting the research for that chapter that I became aware of a recent conceptual shift among history of medicine scholars to which work on mental illness in the classical and Hellenistic traditions is central, namely that a false distinction had been drawn in scholarship prior to the middle of the first decade of this century between medicine and philosophy. In a world in which the mind/soul is viewed as embodied the boundaries between the two aspects of the human person (body and mind/soul), their sickness and health, and those professionals traditionally associated with their treatment—the physician and philosopher—are in reality blurred.<sup>28</sup> Here the work of Philip Van der Eijk on the medicine side has been fundamental,<sup>29</sup> so too has been the work of scholars of classical Graeco-Roman philosophy, particularly those engaged with Hellenistic moral philosophy and

---

*Valeurs dans le stoicisme: du Portique   nos jours. Textes rassembl es en hommage   Michel Spanneut*, ed. M. Soetard (Lille: Presses Universitaires de France, 1993), 171–79, esp. 179: “Certes, il est possible de le pr esenter comme un moraliste, mais   condition de le consid erer en m eme temps comme un ex eg te et un th eologien dignes d’ tre  coute s, sans jamais oublier que son ex eg se, sa th eologie, sa morale sont nourries de l’Evangile connu et v ecu dans toute la vie.” The work of Martin Ritter and Giovanni Viansino on the relationship between John’s ideas on poverty and society and those of earlier Greek philosophers is similarly foundational, although again directed from the perspective of theology. See Adolf Martin Ritter, “Zwischen »Gottesherrschaft« und »einfachem Leben«.” Dio Chrysostomus, Johannes Chrysostomus und das Problem der Humanisierung der Gesellschaft,” *JbAC* 31 (1988): 127–43; and updated discussion, idem, *Studia Chrysostomica. Aufs atze zu Weg, Werk und Wirkung des Johannes Chrysostomos (ca. 349–407)*, STAC, Bd 71 (T ubingen: Mohr Siebeck 2012), 56–66; and Giovanni Viansino, “Aspetti dell’opera di Giovanni Crisostomo,” *Koinonia* 25 (2001): 137–205.

27 H el ene Perdicoyanni-Pal eologou, ed., *The Concept of Madness from Homer to Byzantium: History and Aspects*, Supplementi di Lexis (Amsterdam: Adolf M. Hakkert, 2015).

28 On this point see Wendy Mayer, “Medicine in Transition: Christian Adaptation in the Later Fourth-Century East,” in *Shifting Genres in Late Antiquity*, ed. G. Greatrex and H. Elton with L. McMahon (Farnham: Ashgate, 2015), 12–14.

29 See esp. Philip J. Van der Eijk, *Medicine and Philosophy in Classical Antiquity. Doctors and Philosophers on Nature, Soul, Health and Disease* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005).

therapy of the *pathē*/emotions.<sup>30</sup> Two insights of my own that emerged from that research were the pervasiveness of medical imagery, language, and ideas throughout the Chrysostomic corpus—a phenomenon that invites explanation via more focused research—and the recognition that for John sin is a form of mental illness, a state of imbalance within the mind/soul, for which, unlike mental illnesses that have a physiological cause, the human being is personally responsible.<sup>31</sup> These findings aligned with Laird's independent work on the role in John's thought of the *gnōmē* or mindset as the critical faculty responsible for sin and that of Claire Salem on sanity and insanity in Chrysostom's anthropology.<sup>32</sup> Importantly, Laird has shown how, in arriving at his position concerning the critical role of the *gnōmē*, John draws on a long-standing set of ideas concerning the relationship between the mindset and moral error in Greek thought from Thucydides, Aristotle, and Demosthenes to John's putative teacher of rhetoric in Antioch, Libanius.<sup>33</sup> In a number of articles Geert

---

30 The literature is substantial. See e.g., the essays in Jacques Brunschwig and Martha C. Nussbaum, eds, *Passions & Perceptions: Studies in Hellenistic Philosophy of Mind* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993); Martha C. Nussbaum, *The Therapy of Desire: Theory and Practice in Hellenistic Ethics* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994); and Richard Sorabji, *Emotion and Peace of Mind: From Stoic Agitation to Christian Temptation* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000). On the translatability of the discourses of medicine and practical ethical philosophy see esp. Christopher Gill, "Philosophical Therapy as Preventive Psychological Medicine," in *Mental Disorders in the Classical World*, ed. W.V. Harris (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2013), 339–60. As John T. Fitzgerald, "Galen's *De indolentia* in the Context of Greco-Roman Medicine, Moral Philosophy, and Physiognomy," in *Galen's De indolentia: Essays on a Newly Discovered Letter*, ed. C.K. Rothschild and T.W. Thompson (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2014), 203–20, along with other authors in the same volume, points out, in the medical writer Galen the two traditions (medicine and philosophy) blend together. On the latter point see also Christopher Gill, "Galen and the Stoics: Mortal Enemies or Blood Brothers?," *Phronesis* 52 (2007): 88–120.

31 See Wendy Mayer, "Madness in the Works of John Chrysostom: A Snapshot from Late Antiquity," in *The Concept of Madness*, ed. Perdicoyianni-Paléologou (forthcoming).

32 See, in addition to Laird, *Mindset*, idem, "John Chrysostom and the Anomoeans: Shaping an Antiochene Perspective on Christology," in Mayer and Neil, *Religious Conflict*, 129–49; and Claire E. Salem, "Sanity, Insanity, and Man's Being as Understood by St. John Chrysostom" (PhD diss., Durham University, 2010).

33 Laird, *Mindset*, 135–92. Konstantinos Bosinis, *Johannes Chrysostomus über das Imperium Romanum. Studie zum politischen Denken der Alten Kirche* (Cambridge and Mandelbachtel: Edition Cicero, 2005), demonstrates a similar debt to Demosthenes, although in the domain of political rather than moral philosophy. On the latter, however, see idem, "Two Platonic Images in the Rhetoric of John Chrysostom: 'The Wings of Love' and 'the Charioteer of the Soul'," in *Studia Patristica*, vol. 41, ed. F. Young, M. Edwards,

Roskam is in the process of situating John similarly within the stream of moral philosophy that preceded him, while at the same time demonstrating that, despite the claims of earlier scholars, there is no direct dependency between the ideas of John and those of Plutarch.<sup>34</sup>

In addition to David Rylaarsdam, who persuasively demonstrates the long-standing Greek philosophical tradition of psychagogy within which John situates his pedagogical approach to the souls of his audiences and on which he models his adduction of Paul and other biblical figures as virtue exemplars,<sup>35</sup> a number of doctoral students are in the process of drawing out insights surrounding John's debt to Greek medicine and to Hellenistic moral philosophy. Courtney Van Veller, working on how John constructs the apostle Paul as a Jew, further develops Rylaarsdam's thesis that for John preaching and psychagogy are indistinguishable and that the apostle Paul constitutes a central exemplum for John of the ideal psychagogue, orator, and man of virtue.<sup>36</sup> She also confirms Laird's thesis that for John in achieving the health of the soul the mindset (*gnōmē*) plays a critical role.<sup>37</sup> Jessica Wright, working within the tradition of

---

and P. Parvis, papers presented at the 14th International Conference on Patristic Studies, Oxford, 2003 (Leuven: Peeters, 2006), 433–38.

- 34 Geert Roskam, "John Chrysostom on Pagan Euergetism: A Reading of the First Part of *De inani gloria et de educandis liberis*," *SE* 53 (2014): 147–69; and idem, "Plutarch's Influence on John Chrysostom," *Byz* 85 (2015): forthcoming.
- 35 Rylaarsdam, *Divine Pedagogy*; and idem, "Painful Preaching: John Chrysostom and the Philosophical Tradition of Guiding Souls," *Studia Patristica*, vol. 41, ed. F. Young, M. Edwards, and P. Parvis, papers presented at the 14th International Conference on Patristic Studies, Oxford, 2003 (Leuven: Peeters, 2006), 463–68.
- 36 Courtney Van Veller, "Preaching Paul: John Chrysostom and the Construction of a Non-Jewish Christian Identity" (PhD diss., Boston University, 2015). Preliminary results were communicated in a number of conference papers: "John Chrysostom and the Troubling Jewish 'Otherness' of Paul," NAPS Annual Meeting, Chicago, 23–25 May 2013; "John Chrysostom's Analysis of Paul as a Preacher," SBL Annual Meeting, Chicago, 16–20 November, 2012; and "Chrysostom's Analysis of Paul's 'Gentle' Rhetoric about the Jews and Judaism," SBL Annual Meeting, San Francisco, 19–22 November 2011.
- 37 Van Veller, "Preaching Paul," ch. 4. An insight also developed further in relation to John's preaching and view of emotional therapy in another recent doctoral thesis: Peter Moore, "Gold without Dross: An Assessment of the Debt to John Chrysostom in John Calvin's Oratory" (PhD diss., Macquarie University, 2013); and idem, "Chrysostom's Concept of *γνώμη*: How 'Chosen Life's Orientation' undergirds Chrysostom's Strategy in Preaching," in *Studia Patristica*, vol. 54, ed. Markus Vinzent, L. Mellerin, and H.A.G. Houghton, papers presented at the 16th International Conference on Patristic Studies, Oxford 2011 (Leuven: Peeters, 2013), 351–58.

the history of medicine, is in the process of situating John's medical understanding of the brain, affect and sensation within the conceptualisations of Hippocrates, Galen, and John's contemporary, Nemesius of Emesa.<sup>38</sup> Wright has recently re-examined John's treatise *Ad Stagirium*, in regard to which she argues perceptively that not only is it not the daemon that is responsible for the monk Stagirius' falling sickness (epilepsy?) and despondency (*athumia*), but that the underlying cause of his *athumia* is most likely the unconscious taint of another *pathos* or moral error, an obsession with glory (*doxa*). Only, John advises, when he ceases to cling to *doxa* (a particular failing of ascetics), will Stagirius expel his *athumia* and in turn cut off the nourishment that currently feeds the daemon, so restoring his relationship with God.<sup>39</sup> These findings tie in closely with my own regarding involuntary and volitional mental illness and the agency or otherwise in mental illness of daemons.<sup>40</sup> Together these insights in turn align with the findings Samantha Miller is in the process of eliciting regarding the relationship between the agency of daemons in John's thought, *pathos*/affect/emotion, and moral progress.<sup>41</sup> For John it is all about personal responsibility. Even if a daemon is still invisibly present, when balance between the *pathē* and the rational faculty of the soul is restored, the daemon's capacity to cause harm is neutralised.

---

38 Jessica Wright, "Brain and Soul in Late Antiquity" (PhD diss., Princeton University, forthcoming). Prior to Wright, the only analysis of John's medical thought has been that of Ulrike Bachmann, "Medizinisches in den Schriften des griechischen Kirchenvaters Johannes Chrysostomos" (PhD diss., Institut für Geschichte der Medizin, Universität Düsseldorf, 1984). There have been substantial advances in the approach to the history of medicine in the classical and late-antique periods in the intervening decades.

39 Jessica Wright, "Between Despondency and the Demon: Diagnosing and Treating Spiritual Disorders in John Chrysostom's *Letter to Stageirios*," *JLA* (forthcoming).

40 Mayer, "Madness."

41 Samatha Miller, "No Sympathy for the Devil: The Significance of Demons in John Chrysostom's Soteriology" (PhD diss., Marquette University, forthcoming). Preliminary results have been communicated in the following conference papers: "Fear Not: John Chrysostom's Demonological Discourse as Motivation for Virtue," *Patristic Preaching and Its History of Reception*, Pappas Patristic Institute, Brookline, Mass., 9–11 October 2014; and eadem, "Entering the Arena: Fear and Courage in Chrysostom's *Baptismal Instructions*," NAPS Annual Meeting, Chicago, 22–24 May 2014. See also eadem, "Chrysostom's Monks as Living Exhortations to Poverty and the Rich Life," *Greek Orthodox Theological Review* 58 (2013): 79–98.

#### 4 Shaping the Sick Soul

Once one starts looking at John as a medico-philosophical psychic therapist in the mode of so-called ‘popular’ or moral Hellenistic philosophers and of philosopher-physicians like Galen, the conclusion that this is primarily the mode from which he operates and with which he self-identifies is virtually inescapable. In a forthcoming journal article I have argued that this makes the best sense of John’s *modus operandi* in exile,<sup>42</sup> while in a recent paper I argued that this also makes sense of his ‘anti-intellectual’ posturing.<sup>43</sup> The latter is not the total rejection of philosophy and contemporary oratory that it seems, but a rejection of what misleadingly he represents as the sum total of Greek *paideia* and secular rhetorical-philosophical pedagogy, namely, epideictic rhetoric or oratory that is showy and aimed at applause and self-promotion.<sup>44</sup> The philosophical-oratorical mode that John himself adopts—the protreptic, in which oratory is directed towards psychagogy, that is, the production of the good or virtuous citizen—is one that continued unabandoned and in parallel from Plato through the Hellenistic and early imperial periods well into late antiquity.<sup>45</sup> That is, in the mode of purveyors of technical and scientific knowledge in antiquity for whom it was important in an agonistic society not just to convey the content of the scientific knowledge they were promoting, but to convince

---

42 Wendy Mayer, “The Persistence in Late Antiquity of Medico-Philosophical Psychic Therapy,” *JLA* (forthcoming).

43 Eadem, “John Chrysostom as a Son of Hellenism—a Christian Philosopher Rooted in Antiochene *paideia*,” *Intellektueller Austausch und religiöse Diversität in Antiochien 350–450/Intellectual Exchange and Religious Diversity in Antioch (CE 350–450)*, Kloster Kappel a. Albis, 9–12 July 2014 (forthcoming in expanded, revised form in *ibid.*, ed. Silke Petre-Bergjan and Susanna Elm [Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck]).

44 See Jutta Tloka, *Griechische Christen—christliche Griechen. Plausibilierungsstrategien des antiken Christentums bei Origenes und Johannes Chrysostomos*, STAC, Bd 30 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2005), 125–246, esp. 166 and 226. This strategy is itself part of performing (in the agonistic mode referred to below) the very *paideia* that John claims to reject. Cf. Lieve Van Hoof, “Performing *paideia*: Greek Culture as an Instrument for Social Promotion in the Fourth Century AD,” *CQ* 63 (2013): 387–406.

45 This was the approach adopted by the Hellenistic moral philosophers, who continued in the footsteps of the First as opposed to Second Sophistic. Although the Graeco-Roman educational curriculum drew a division between philosophy and rhetoric, the two disciplines were never in reality as distinct. Neither were the aims of the First and Second Sophistic, both of which were directed towards the formation of the ideal elite male citizen. As a demonstration of this see the marked similarity in approach of John and Libanius to the relationship between *paideia*, the mindset, and the formation of the good citizen outlined by Laird, *Mindset*, 154–55.



the audience of its superiority over that of other philosophers or physicians,<sup>46</sup> John deliberately constructs a false dichotomy in which he pits the true (moral = Christian) philosophy directed towards the social good against (an epideictic = secular Greek) one that (he claims) has no social benefit.<sup>47</sup> Protreptic, as Gill argues, is a key element in medico-philosophical therapeutics.<sup>48</sup>

In order to illustrate how such therapeutics dominate John's self-identity, thought, and approach, we turn in brief to a few concrete examples. The most blatant case is the very last treatise, which he wrote from exile, *Ad eos qui scandalizatur*.<sup>49</sup> Because scholars had been viewing the treatise through a theological lens the nature of the relationship between the extended medicalised introduction and the rest of the treatise, which is about theodicy and divine providence, had gone unrecognised.<sup>50</sup> In fact, without understanding its genre, it is hard on first glance to understand how the contents of either this treatise or its companion on the pseudo-Stoic paradox, *Quod nemo laeditur*,<sup>51</sup> could have been thought by either John or their recipients to have provided consolation for his persecuted supporters.<sup>52</sup> However, not only, as we will see shortly, are both treatises appropriate within this particular framework,<sup>53</sup> but they go hand-in-hand, too, with the bulk of John's letters from exile to Olympias. That is, what he offers in his letters to Olympias and in these two treatises is a

---

46 See Susan P. Mattern, *Galen and the Rhetoric of Healing* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2008), esp. 69–94; and Tamsyn S. Barton, *Power and Knowledge: Astrology, Physiognomics and Medicine under the Roman Empire* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1994).

47 For the underlying conceit commonly employed by early Christian writers upon which John builds (that the oratory of the uneducated apostles was superior to that of Greek philosophers) see Manfred Bambeck, "Fischer und Bauern gegen Philosophen und sonstige Grosskopfen; ein christlicher Topos in Antike und Mittelalter," *Mittellateinisches Jahrbuch* 18 (1983): 29–50.

48 Gill, "Philosophical Therapy," 342–43.

49 A.-M. Malingrey, ed., *Jean Chrysostome. Sur la Providence de Dieu*, SC, vol. 79 (Paris: Éditions du Cerf, 1961). Henceforth cited as *Scand.*

50 For a more detailed discussion of the genre of this treatise and previous scholarship on the question see Mayer, "Persistence."

51 A.-M. Malingrey, *Jean Chrysostome. Lettre d'exil. A Olympias et à tous les fidèles (Quod nemo laeditur)*, SC, vol. 103 (Paris: Éditions du Cerf, 1964).

52 Both were sent to Olympias and her household in early 407 CE. *Scand.* was clearly intended for wider distribution. See Mayer, "Persistence."

53 On the close relationship between consolation literature and psychotherapeutic treatises see Gill, "Philosophical Therapy," 342–57.



consistent program of psychic therapy directed at the soul-health of those among whom they circulated.<sup>54</sup>

When we examine *Ad eos qui scandalizatur* from the perspective of philosophical essays on the therapy of the emotions/*pathē* rather than from the viewpoint of its Christian message, it conforms in every respect, as identified by Gill, to the motive and form of this long-standing medico-philosophical genre. The most important point for our purposes is that such treatises or *logoi* were seen as not just a discussion of psychic therapy but as effective therapy in themselves. That is, the *logos* itself is a medical treatment.<sup>55</sup> In the service of identifying the roots of psychological or soul-sickness and helping the patient to work towards health (the core strategy of medico-philosophical *logoi*) Gill identifies across such works, irrespective of the particular psychology and philosophical stance of the practitioner, four key elements. The first is a presupposed conception of happiness as a way of life (this includes progress toward virtue and personal agency). The second element is an account of human psychology linked to ethical development (which includes scope for rational agency; the relationship between reason, emotion, and desire; and the prerequisites of ethical development). The third is formulation of the central message in a way that engages the individual's concerns/state of mind at the start of therapy. The fourth element is offering advice of a kind that enables the individual to rebuild their belief-set in a way that provides a secure basis for development away from the framework of beliefs that generates psychological illness towards one that generates well-being and happiness.<sup>56</sup>

Translating *skandalon* as 'moral error', which is how John conceives of the conditions that occasion sin,<sup>57</sup> supplies the key to understanding the function of this treatise. So in *Ad eos qui scandalizatur* John makes it clear that its purpose is soul therapy by immediately drawing a parallel between the treatment of physical illnesses and those of the soul.<sup>58</sup> He seeks to convince his patient/s of the superiority of the particular (psychic) therapy that he delivers,<sup>59</sup> which, as we have argued already, is an essential requirement of

54 This point is argued in greater detail in Mayer, "Persistence."

55 See Heinrich von Staden, "La lecture comme thérapie dans la médecine gréco-romaine," *Comptes-rendus des séances de l'Académie des Inscriptions et Belles-Lettres* 146 (2002): 803–22.

56 Gill, "Philosophical Therapy," 348–51.

57 For this meaning see Lampe, *PGL* s.v. *σκανδάλον* 4. On sin as a mental illness in John's thought in which the mind/soul is disordered as a result of imbalance between reason and *pathē* see Salem, "Sanity, Insanity."

58 John Chrysostom, *Scand.* prol. 1–2 (SC 79.52–54).

59 *Ibid.*, prol. 3–4 (SC 79.54).

the rhetorical and performative character of such discourse. While the therapy addresses a current disease of the soul (a lapse into moral error),<sup>60</sup> more importantly the treatment is targeted at preventing future recurrences of the same illness, further extending its benefit as a prophylactic against “the other passions/emotions.”<sup>61</sup> The patient is assumed to be a responsible agent, capable in principle of understanding the cause of his/her own current distress and of relieving this by a deliberate programme of thoughts. For this reason John immediately highlights the need for the sufferer to learn the cause of the current illness, and introduces the medium for the treatment—*logos* or rational argument.<sup>62</sup> He then emphasises that it is up to the patient as to whether the treatment is effective.<sup>63</sup> The cause that is said to underly the diagnosis (‘a mindset’ or *γνώμη* that is disordered)<sup>64</sup> is also consistent with the genre and provides another unmistakable clue that we are dealing here with medico-philosophical therapy. In fact, if we stripped out the copious scriptural exempla adduced throughout the treatise and substituted another concept of the divine for the Christian God, what we have here is a treatise on correcting the errors and passions of the soul that could have been written equally by Galen or one of the Stoic-Epicurean practical-ethical philosophers. We should note that, as Yannis Papadogiannakis shows in a recent study, Theodoret, likewise educated at Antioch at the end of the fourth century, adduces virtually the same set of ideas in the prologue (1.1–2) to his treatise *Graecarum affectionum curatio*.<sup>65</sup>

Just as in *Ad eos qui scandalizatur* the topic itself (human suffering and the correct attitude towards it) aligns with a common objective of therapeutic medico-philosophical treatises—advising the patient on “what is needed to provide the basis of emotional resilience and stability”<sup>66</sup>—so in *Quod nemo laeditur* the topic (personal agency in suffering and the neutralisation of suffering via the correct mindset) is closely related. To emphasise this point, John adduces in summary form the basic argument of *Quod nemo laeditur* (that

60 Ibid., prol. 2.7 (SC 79.52); 1.1.8–9 (SC 79.56); and 1.3.2 (SC 79.56).

61 Ibid., 1.1–2 (SC 79.56).

62 Ibid., 1.1 and 3 (SC 79.56).

63 Ibid., 1.3.4 (SC 79.56); and 1.5.2–3 (SC 79.58).

64 Ibid., 2.1.2 (SC 79.60).

65 Yannis Papadogiannakis, *Christianity and Hellenism in the Fifth-Century Greek East: Theodoret's Apologetics against the Greeks in Context*, Hellenic Studies, vol. 49 (Washington, D.C.: Center for Hellenic Studies, 2013), 23–51.

66 Gill, “Philosophical Therapy,” 341 and 352.

nothing harms nor causes to lapse into moral error those who are sober)<sup>67</sup> in chapter 13 of *Ad eos qui scandalizatur* as a key component of the structural centre (chapters 12–18) of that treatise.<sup>68</sup> Like the obvious clues embedded in the vocabulary, arguments and structure of *Ad eos qui scandalizatur*, the genre, vocabulary and structure of *Quod nemo laeditur* flag it for its recipients (John's persecuted and suffering supporters) as a therapeutic *logos* that targets the mind/soul. Here it is less the explicit language of medicine that alerts the audience than the employment of the diatribe, a rhetorical form commonly used in the communication of moral philosophy.<sup>69</sup> However, I beg to differ from Margaret Schatkin's otherwise insightful analysis of the treatise, which she views as an example of Christian apologetics,<sup>70</sup> to argue that the content and purpose of the treatise make best sense when viewed not as directed towards a defence of the Christian faith (whether to insiders or outsiders), but rather, like the comparanda from Greek and Roman philosophy that she cites, as a medium for (Christian) philosophical-psychological therapy.

When we turn to the treatise itself this becomes readily evident. As with *Ad eos qui scandalizatur* we are concerned here with a *logos* directed towards the correction or healing of the soul.<sup>71</sup> The patient is alerted to the erroneous beliefs currently held (that virtue, ἀρετή, can be negatively affected by external causes),<sup>72</sup> enabling them to rebuild their belief-set in a way that provides a secure basis for development away from the framework of beliefs that generates psychological illness towards one that generates well-being and

67 On the key concept of sobriety in John's thought (associated intimately with ideas of psychic balance and rational control of the *pathē*) see Maximilijan Žitnik, *NHΨΤΣ: Christliche Nüchternheit nach Johannes Chrysostomus*, OCA, vol. 290 (Rome: Pontificio Istituto Orientale, 2011).

68 sc 79.188–200. Regarding the role of these chapters in the structure of *Scand.* see Mayer, "Persistence." John explicitly refers to the treatise *Nemo laed.* at *Scand.* 15.7.7–9 (sc 79.218).

69 See Margaret Schatkin, *John Chrysostom as Apologist, with special reference to De incomprehensibili, Quod nemo laeditur, Ad eos qui scandalizati sunt, and Adversus oppugatores vitae monasticae* (Thessaloniki: Patriarch. Hidruma Paterikon Meleton, 1987), 83–89.

70 *Ibid.*, 90.

71 John Chrysostom, *Nemo laed.* 1.4 (sc 103.56); 1.9–17 (sc 103.58); and 1.55–61 (sc 103.62). Cf. 7.1 (sc 103.94), where John explicitly asks how he is to treat (ἰασαίμεθα) those with the disposition in question, and 6.95–97 (sc 103.94), where the sickness is identified as a mind suffering from unreason (ἀλογίαν . . . διανοίας).

72 *Ibid.*, 2.17–26 (sc 103.64). Here and in the lines that follow John explicitly uses the language of "false belief/opinion" (τὰς πεπλανημένας δόξας), another clear indication that the treatise (λόγος) is directed towards therapy of the soul.

happiness.<sup>73</sup> Throughout the treatise the link between cognitive or psychological sobriety (*nēpsis*), the correct mindset, psychological health, and virtue is a recurrent theme.<sup>74</sup> The most important point here, however, is not that both *Quod nemo laeditur* and *Ad eos qui scandalizatur* are twin psychotherapeutic treatises directed towards the correction and soul-health of John's supporters, but that, as with his letters to Olympias, which he also characterises as medications (*pharmaka*),<sup>75</sup> John could hardly in the last moments of his life have expected his supporters to accept this particular approach, had it not been central to how he and they both viewed the human person and had he not long since prepared the ground for it.<sup>76</sup>

As Schatkin herself points out, John had already communicated the advice central to *Quod nemo laeditur* at length in *In Acta apostolorum homiliae* 51 and more briefly in *In Matthaëum homilia* 80/81, albeit within a more explicitly Christianised framework.<sup>77</sup> As it turns out, when we look closely at *In Matthaëum homilia* 80/81 the entire homily is concerned with the healing of the soul, from its discussion of the woman who anointed Jesus' feet<sup>78</sup> to the proper attitude towards wealth and poverty and the regulation of ἐπιθυμία (desire).<sup>79</sup> In the former case, the woman is said to have approached Jesus because she was confident that, having healed Simon's body of leprosy, he would swiftly

73 The third and fourth elements common to psychotherapeutic treatises as identified by Gill (see n.55 above). On the structure of the treatise—chapters 2–11 adduce theoretical proofs and chapters 12–17 historical proofs (drawn from scripture)—see Schatkin, *Chrysostom as Apologist*, 94–105.

74 E.g., John Chrysostom, *Nemo laed.* 4.1–44 (SC 103.74–78); 7.10–61 (SC 103.94–98); 12.1–19 (SC 103.116); 15 (SC 103.130–34); and 16.43–52 (SC 103.138). This fulfils the first and second elements common to such therapy.

75 See Livia Neureiter, "Health and Healing as Recurrent Topics in John Chrysostom's Correspondence with Olympias," in *Studia Patristica*, vol. 47, ed. J. Baun, A. Cameron, M. Edwards, and M. Vinzent, papers presented at the 15th International Conference on Patristic Studies, Oxford 2007 (Leuven: Peeters, 2010), 267–72; and Mayer, "Persistence."

76 So Laurence Brottier, "Un jeu de mots intraduisible: le combat entre *thumos* et *athumia* dans des homélies de Jean Chrysostome," *Revue de philologie, de littérature et d'histoire anciennes* 72 (1998): 189–204, points out that the play on words θυμός-ἀθυμία-εὐθυμία that is a key element in John's therapeutics addressed to Olympias is part of the philosophic discourse on illnesses of the soul found in John's own earlier discourse, most notably in his homilies *De statu*s (387 CE). For John's treatment of the same set of ideas in his early treatise *Ad Stagiriūm* see Wright, "Between Despondency."

77 Schatkin, *Chrysostom as Apologist*, 91.

78 John Chrysostom, *In Matt. hom.* 80/81 (PG 58.723–27).

79 *Ibid.* (PG 58.727–30).

wipe the impurity from her soul.<sup>80</sup> As it turns out, however, as John explains to his audience, it is the woman who has the correct mindset and the disciples whose reason is compromised.<sup>81</sup> In John's psychology not all *pathos* is problematic and in this case the *pathos* the woman exhibits is one that draws out caring for others (an important aspect of the virtue of *eleemosynē*),<sup>82</sup> which is then opposed to the negative *pathos* of love of money (*philargyria*) exhibited by Judas.<sup>83</sup> This brings John to his key point: if Judas, who spent so much time with Jesus, was not healed, how can we expect to expel this sickness without major treatment and effort?<sup>84</sup> From this point the homily moves into a focused explanation of how personal agency is operative in this particular illness of the soul, how this desire (ἐπιθυμία) is not natural but results from laziness on the part of the individual, the importance of moderation, and how everything, especially wealth and poverty, is in reality the opposite of what one intuitively thinks to be the case. All of this is constantly linked to the healthy state or otherwise of the soul, concluding with a summation of his advice to his audience in the dictum that no one can harm us, if we are sober; rather, harm comes to us not from poverty, but from ourselves.<sup>85</sup>

We could in fact adduce numerous examples from his homilies to show how John consistently conceives of his sermons as therapeutic *logoi* and how this holistic programme for bringing about psychic health permeates his thought,<sup>86</sup> but we will move instead to one further respect in which his therapeutics are

80 Ibid. (PG 58.723.10–15 *a.t.*). Cf. PG 58.724.18–21, where he compares her to all of the other women who came to Jesus to be healed of physical illnesses. This woman approached for the correction of her soul.

81 Ibid. (PG 58.725.16–27). In fact it is the woman who exhibits *megalopsychia*.

82 Ibid. (PG 58.726.32–43).

83 Ibid. (PG 58.727.50–52). At line 54 this is described as a sickness from which constant exposure to Christ's teaching did not free him.

84 Ibid. (PG 58.728.1–3).

85 Ibid. (PG 58.730.32–34): ἂν νήφωμεν, οὐδεὶς ἡμᾶς λυμανεῖται· καὶ ὅτι οὐ παρὰ πένιαν, ἀλλὰ παρ' ἡμᾶς αὐτοὺς ἡ βλάβη γίνεται. See Schatkin, *Chrysostom as Apologist*, 93, who notes that at PG 58.729 John cites a line of iambic pentameter from a non-Christian source in support.

86 For examples drawn from his homilies and for a discussion of how he conceives of preaching as therapy for the soul in his treatise *De sac.* see further Rylaarsdam, *Divine Pedagogy, passim*; and Van Veller, "Preaching Paul," ch. 1. In *In Ioh. hom.* 2/1 (PG 59.36.17–19) John explicitly adduces the long-standing topos of the philosopher's school (here = church) as a surgery for patients who suffer sicknesses of the soul. We use 'holistic' here in the sense of therapy directed towards the health of the whole human person, body and soul/mind, since the two parts are indivisible and their health mutually connected. On how the sympathetic relationship between body and soul was viewed see Brooke Holmes, "Disturbing Connections: Sympathetic Affections, Mental Disorder, and the Elusive Soul in Galen," in

holistic and align with the Hellenistic philosophical tradition within which he situates himself. In viewing John as a philosopher in the psychotherapeutic mode we might be tempted to separate the exegetical portion from the moral-ethical content in John's preaching to focus solely on the latter. As David Rylaarsdam has convincingly argued, this would be a mistake.<sup>87</sup> Once again pushing his findings further, what we will argue here is that, if we are to accept that John viewed himself primarily as a Christian philosopher and psychagogue, then we should perhaps also consider that in his approach to exegesis he inherited or at least drew upon another aspect of that tradition. The performance of exegesis is not alien to the role of a therapist raised in the traditions of the Hellenistic moral philosophers. As David Sedley points out, it was precisely moral philosophers like Philodemus who in the first century BCE in a diaspora setting gave rise to a tradition of teaching the history of the Athenian philosophical school and of the study of the school's 'treasured scriptures'. That is, it is at this period that the tradition of doxography begins along with the formation of a philosophical canon, leading in turn to the production of commentaries upon those scriptures.<sup>88</sup> In the second century CE we see the same phenomenon (doxography, the canonisation of earlier texts) developing within the medical stream.<sup>89</sup> In light of the way in which John situates himself firmly within the Hellenistic medico-philosophical tradition, we should perhaps entertain the idea that in delivering therapeutic *logoi* John drew not just on a Jewish-Christian conception of scriptural exegesis. It is likely that he drew on one derived from the medical and philosophical traditions as well, and that in this respect in his preaching, as we observed in *In Matthaeum homilia* 80/81, exegesis and moral advice form part of an integrated whole and serve one and the same therapeutic purpose.

## 5 Conclusion

It has long been recognised that, as a preacher, John's primary concern is with the moral formation of his audience, with pastoral care. But what we can now

---

*Mental Disorders in the Classical World*, ed. W.V. Harris (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2013), esp. 155–63, and literature.

87 Rylaarsdam, *Divine Pedagogy*, 111–23, esp. 121.

88 David Sedley, "Philodemus and the Decentralisation of Philosophy," *Cronache ercolanesi* 33 (2003): 31–41.

89 See P.J. Van der Eijk, ed., *Ancient Histories of Medicine: Essays in Medical Doxography and Historiography in Classical Antiquity*, *Ancient Histories of Medicine*, vol. 20 (Leiden: Brill, 1999).

recognise is that this is moral formation with a very specific focus—virtue ethics; and pastoral care not in a modern sense but in the sense of *Seelsorge* germane to the classical and Hellenistic Greek world—care for the health of the soul. As we have seen, for John rhetoric in the form of the therapeutic *logos* is directed towards teaching the individual how to regulate their soul in regard to desire and affect/*pathos*, in large part through attainment of the correct mindset. In this sense, John situates himself clearly as a teacher within a particular school (in his case, neo-Nicene Christian) of moral philosophy. That school draws strongly on the medico-philosophical traditions in which at Antioch John himself must have been trained, both Platonic-Aristotelian (or Galenist) and Stoic-Epicurean. As Susanna Elm points out in *Sons of Hellenism*, this is very much how Gregory of Nazianzus in *Oratio* 2 for his own part conceived of Christian leadership and the priesthood.<sup>90</sup> That is, the priest is a (true) philosopher, one who is a physician of the soul, and whose teachings are medicines. When we take away the retrospective lens of theology, the John who emerges is, not unlike Gregory, a product of late-antique *paideia*, concerned fundamentally with teaching his students how to correctly shape their own soul, in the mode of a holistic (albeit Christian) medico-philosophical psychic therapist.

### Bibliography

- Jerome. *Epistulae* (Isidorus Hilberg, ed., *Sancti Eusebii Hieronymi Opera*. pars 2: *Epistulae LXXI–CXX*, CSEL, vol. 55. 2nd ed. Vienna: F. Tempisky, 1996).
- John of Damascus. *Encomium in s. Iohannem Chrysostomum* (BHG 879, CPG 8064) (P.B. Kotter, ed., *Die Schriften des Johannes von Damaskos*, Bd 5: *Opera homiletica et hagiographica*, PTS, Bd 29. Berlin: De Gruyter, 1988).
- John Chrysostom. *Ad eos qui scandalizatur* (A.-M. Malingrey, ed., *Jean Chrysostome. Sur la Providence de Dieu*, SC, vol. 79. Paris: Éditions du Cerf, 1961).
- . *De s. Phoca* (PG 50.699–706).
- . *Epistulae 1–17 ad Olympiadem* (A.-M. Malingrey, ed., *Jean Chrysostome. Lettres à Olympias*, seconde édition augmentée de la *Vie anonyme d'Olympias*, SC, vol. 13bis. Paris: Éditions du Cerf, 1968).
- . *In Acta apostolorum homiliae* (PG 60.13–384).
- . *In illud: Messis quidem multa* (PG 63.515–24).
- . *In illud: Ne timueritis cum diues factus fuerit homo, homilia 1* (PG 55.499–512).
- . *In Matthaëum homiliae* (PG, vols 57 and 58).
- . *In Titum homiliae 1–6* (PG 62.663–700).

<sup>90</sup> Elm, *Sons of Hellenism*, 166–76.



- . *Laus Diodori* (PG 52.761–766).
- . *Quales ducendae sint uxores* (PG 51.225–42).
- . *Quod nemo laeditur* (A.-M. Malingrey, ed., *Jean Chrysostome. Lettre d'exil. A Olympias et à tous les fidèles* [*Quod nemo laeditur*], SC, vol. 103. Paris: Éditions du Cerf, 1964.)
- Palladius. *Dialogus de vita s. Iohannis Chrysostomi* (A.-M. Malingrey and P. Leclercq, eds, *Palladios. Dialogue sur la vie de Jean Chrysostome*, 2 vols, SC, vols 341–42. Paris: Éditions du Cerf, 1988).
- Anderson, Gary A., Ruth A. Clements, and David Satran, eds. *New Approaches to the Study of Biblical Interpretation in Judaism of the Second Temple Period and in Early Christianity*, Studies on the Texts of the Desert of Judah, vol. 106. Leiden: Brill, 2013.
- Anonymous. "Chrysostom." *The British Quarterly Review* 48 (1868): 377–414.
- Bachmann, Ulrike. "Medizinisches in den Schriften des griechischen Kirchenvaters Johannes Chrysostomos." PhD diss., Institut für Geschichte der Medizin, Universität Düsseldorf, 1984.
- Bady, Guillaume. "Les traductions latines anciennes de Jean Chrysostome: motifs et paradoxes." In *L'Antiquité tardive dans les collections médiévales: textes et représentations, VI<sup>e</sup>–XIV<sup>e</sup> siècle*, edited by S. Gioanni and B. Grévin, CEFR, vol. 405, 303–16. Rome: l'École française de Rome, 2008.
- Bambeck, Manfred. "Fischer und Bauern gegen Philosophen und sonstige Grosskopfen; ein christlicher Topos in Antike und Mittelalter." *Mittelateinisches Jahrbuch* 18 (1983): 29–50.
- Barton, Tamsyn S. *Power and Knowledge: Astrology, Physiognomics and Medicine under the Roman Empire*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1994.
- Baur, Chrysostomus. *S. Jean Chrysostome et ses œuvres dans l'histoire littéraire*, Recueil de travaux publiés par les membres des conférences d'histoire et de philologie, 18<sup>e</sup> Fascicule. Louvain: Bureaux du Recueil and Paris: Albert Fontemoing, 1907.
- Bosinis, Konstantinos. "Two Platonic Images in the Rhetoric of John Chrysostom: 'The Wings of Love' and 'the Charioteer of the Soul.'" In *Studia Patristica*, vol. 41, edited by F. Young, M. Edwards, and P. Parvis, papers presented at the 14th International Conference on Patristic Studies, Oxford, 2003, 433–38. Leuven: Peeters, 2006.
- Bosinis, Konstantinos. *Johannes Chrysostomus über das Imperium Romanum. Studie zum politischen Denken der Alten Kirche*. Cambridge and Mandelbachtel: Edition Cicero, 2006.
- Brottier, Laurence. "Un jeu de mots intraduisible: le combat entre *thumos* et *athumia* dans des homélies de Jean Chrysostome." *Revue de philologie, de littérature et d'histoire anciennes* 72 (1998): 189–204.
- Brunschwig, Jacques, and Martha C. Nussbaum, eds. *Passions & Perceptions: Studies in Hellenistic Philosophy of Mind*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993.



- Bush, Robert Wheler. *The Life and Times of Chrysostom*. London: The Religious Tract Society, 1885.
- Childers, Jeffrey W. "Chrysostom in Syriac Dress." In *Studia Patristica*, vol. 67, edited by Markus Vinzent, papers presented at the 16th International Conference on Patristic Studies, Oxford 2011, 323–32. Leuven: Peeters, 2013.
- Clark, Elizabeth A. *Reading Renunciation: Asceticism and Scripture in Early Christianity*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1999.
- Van der Eijk, Philip J. *Medicine and Philosophy in Classical Antiquity. Doctors and Philosophers on Nature, Soul, Health and Disease*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005.
- , ed. *Ancient Histories of Medicine: Essays in Medical Doxography and Historiography in Classical Antiquity*, Ancient Histories of Medicine, vol. 20. Leiden: Brill, 1999.
- Elm, Susanna. "The Dog that did not Bark: Doctrine and Patriarchal Authority in the Conflict between Theophilus of Alexandria and John Chrysostom of Constantinople." In *Christian Origins. Theology, Rhetoric and Community*, edited by L. Ayres and G. Jones, 66–93. London: Routledge, 1998.
- . *Sons of Hellenism, Fathers of the Church: Emperor Julian, Gregory of Nazianzus and the Vision of Rome*, TCH, vol. 49. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2012.
- Fairbairn, Donald. "Patristic Exegesis and Theology: The Cart and the Horse." *WTJ* 69 (2007): 1–19.
- Fitzgerald, John T. "Galen's *De indolentia* in the Context of Greco-Roman Medicine, Moral Philosophy, and Physiognomy." In *Galen's De indolentia: Essays on a Newly Discovered Letter*, edited by C.K. Rothschild and T.W. Thompson, 203–20. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2014.
- Förster, Theodor. *Chrysostomus in seinem Verhältnis zur antiochenischen Schule. Ein Beitrag zur Dogmengeschichte*. Gotha: F. & A. Perthes, 1869.
- Gill, Christopher. "Galen and the Stoics: Mortal Enemies or Blood Brothers?" *Phronesis* 52 (2007): 88–120.
- . "Philosophical Therapy as Preventive Psychological Medicine." In *Mental Disorders in the Classical World*, edited by W.V. Harris, 339–60. Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2013.
- Grypeou, Emmanouela, and Helen Spurling. *The Book of Genesis in Late Antiquity: Encounters between Jewish and Christian Exegesis*, Jewish and Christian Perspectives, vol. 24. Leiden: Brill, 2013.
- Hatch, Edwin. *The Influence of Greek Ideas and Usages upon the Christian Church*, edited by A.M. Fairbairn. London: Williams and Norgate, 1890.
- Heiser, Andreas. *Die Paulusinszenierung des Johannes Chrysostomus. Epitheta und ihre Vorgeschichte*, STAC, Bd 70. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck 2012.

- Holmes, Brooke. "Disturbing Connections: Sympathetic Affections, Mental Disorder, and the Elusive Soul in Galen." In *Mental Disorders in the Classical World*, edited by W.V. Harris, 147–76. Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2013.
- Van Hoof, Lieve. "Performing *paideia*: Greek Culture as an Instrument for Social Promotion in the Fourth Century AD" *CQ* 63 (2013): 387–406.
- Kannengiesser, Charles. "‘Clothed with Spiritual Fire’: John Chrysostom’s Homilies on the Letter to Hebrews." In *Christology, Hermeneutics, and Hebrews: Profiles from the History of Interpretation*, edited by J.C. Laansma and D.J. Trieier, LNTS, vol. 423, 74–83. London: T & T Clark, 2012.
- Katos, Demetrios. *Palladius of Helenopolis: The Origenist Advocate*, OECs. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011.
- Lai, Pak-Wah. "John Chrysostom and the Hermeneutics of Exemplar Portraits." PhD diss., Durham University, 2010.
- Laird, Raymond J. *Mindset, Moral Choice and Sin in the Anthropology of John Chrysostom*, Early Christian Studies, vol. 15. Strathfield, N.S.W.: St Pauls Publications, 2012.
- . "John Chrysostom and the Anomoeans: Shaping an Antiochene Perspective on Christology." In *Religious Conflict from Early Christianity to the Rise of Islam*, edited by Wendy Mayer and Bronwen Neil, AKG, Bd 121, 129–49. Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2013.
- Liebeschuetz, J.H.W.G. "The Fall of John Chrysostom." *Nottingham Medieval Studies* 29 (1985): 1–31.
- Malingrey, Anne-Marie. "Philosophia": *Étude d'un groupe de mots dans la littérature grecque, des Présocratiques au IV<sup>e</sup> siècle après J.C.*, Études et Commentaires, vol. 40. Paris: Librairie C. Klincksieck, 1961.
- . "Résonances stoïciennes dans l'oeuvre de Jean Chrysostome." *Diotima. Revue de recherche philosophique* 7 (1979): 116–21.
- . "Saint Jean Chrysostome moraliste?" In *Valeurs dans le stoïcisme: du Portique à nos jours. Textes rassemblés en hommage à Michel Spanneut*, edited by M. Soetard, 171–79. Lille: Presses Universitaires de France, 1993.
- Mattern, Susan P. *Galen and the Rhetoric of Healing*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2008.
- Maxwell, Jacqueline. *Christianization and Communication in Late Antiquity: John Chrysostom and his Congregation in Antioch*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006.
- Mayer, Wendy. "The Making of a Saint. John Chrysostom in Early Historiography." In *Chrysostomosbilder in 1600 Jahren: Facetten der Wirkungsgeschichte eines Kirchenvaters*, edited by M. Wallraff and R. Brändle, AKG, Bd 105, 39–59. Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2008.
- . "Media Manipulation as a Tool in Religious Conflict: Controlling the Narrative Surrounding the Deposition of John Chrysostom." In *Religious Conflict from Early*

- Christianity to the Rise of Islam*, edited by Wendy Mayer and Bronwen Neil, AKG, Bd 121, 151–68. Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2013.
- . “Medicine in Transition: Christian Adaptation in the Later Fourth-Century East.” In *Shifting Genres in Late Antiquity*, edited by G. Greatrex and H. Elton with L. McMahon, 11–26. Farnham: Ashgate, 2015.
- . “Madness in the Works of John Chrysostom: A Snapshot from Late Antiquity.” In *The Concept of Madness from Homer to Byzantium: History and Aspects*, edited by H el ene Perdicoyianni-Pal eologou. Amsterdam: Adolf M. Hakkert, 2015.
- . “The Persistence in Late Antiquity of Medico-Philosophical Psychic Therapy.” *JLA* 8 (2015): forthcoming.
- McGuckin, John A. “Patristics,” “Patrology.” In J.A. McGuckin, *The Westminster Handbook to Patristic Theology*, 252–54. Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2004.
- Miller, Samantha. “Chrysostom’s Monks as Living Exhortations to Poverty and the Rich Life.” *Greek Orthodox Theological Review* 58 (2013): 79–98.
- Mitchell, Margaret M. *The Heavenly Trumpet: John Chrysostom and the Art of Pauline Interpretation*, Hermeneutische Untersuchungen zur Theologie, Bd 40. T ubingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2000.
- Moore, Peter. “Gold without Dross: An Assessment of the Debt to John Chrysostom in John Calvin’s Oratory.” PhD diss., Macquarie University, 2013.
- . “Chrysostom’s Concept of  $\gamma\nu\acute{\omega}\mu\eta$ : How ‘Chosen Life’s Orientation’ undergirds Chrysostom’s Strategy in Preaching.” In *Studia Patristica*, vol. 54, edited by Markus Vinzent, L. Mellerin, and H.A.G. Houghton, papers presented at the 16th International Conference on Patristic Studies, Oxford 2011, 351–58. Leuven: Peeters, 2013.
- Neander, August. *Der heilige Johannes Chrysostomus und die Kirche, besonders des Orients, in dessen Zeitalter*, 2 vols, 3rd ed. Berlin: Ferd. D ummmler’s Buchhandlung, 1848–1849.
- Neureiter, Livia. “Health and Healing as Recurrent Topics in John Chrysostom’s Correspondence with Olympias.” In *Studia Patristica*, vol. 47, edited by J. Baun, A. Cameron, M. Edwards, and M. Vinzent, papers presented at the 15th International Conference on Patristic Studies, Oxford 2007, 267–72. Leuven: Peeters, 2010.
- Van Nuffelen, Peter. “Palladius and the Johannite Schism.” *JEH* 64 (2013): 1–19.
- . “Theophilus against John Chrysostom: The Fragments of a Lost *liber* and the Reasons for John’s Deposition.” *Adamantius* 19 (2013): 138–55.
- Nussbaum, Martha. *The Therapy of Desire: Theory and Practice in Hellenistic Ethics*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994.
- Papadogiannakis, Yannis. *Christianity and Hellenism in the Fifth-Century Greek East: Theodoret’s Apologetics against the Greeks in Context*, Hellenic Studies, vol. 49. Washington, D.C.: Center for Hellenic Studies, 2013.

- Perdicoyianni-Paléologou, Hélène, ed. *The Concept of Madness from Homer to Byzantium: History and Aspects*, Supplementi di Lexis. Amsterdam: Adolf M. Hakkert, 2015.
- Perthes, Frederic Matthaeus. *Des Bischofs Johannes Chrysostomus Leben nach den Forschungen Neanders, Böhringers und anderer für die Familie unserer Tage dargestellt*. Hamburg and Gotha: F. & A. Perthes, 1853.
- Ritter, Adolf Martin. "Zwischen »Gottesherrschaft« und »einfachem Leben«. Dio Chrysostomus, Johannes Chrysostomus und das Problem der Humanisierung der Gesellschaft." *JbAC* 31 (1988): 127–43.
- . *Studia Chrysostomica. Aufsätze zu Weg, Werk und Wirkung des Johannes Chrysostomos (ca. 349–407)*, STAC, Bd 71. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2012.
- Roskam, Geert. "John Chrysostom on Pagan Euergestism: A Reading of the First Part of *De inani gloria et de educandis liberis*." *SE* 53 (2014): 147–69.
- . "Plutarch's Influence on John Chrysostom." *Byz* 85 (2015): forthcoming.
- Rylaarsdam, David. "Painful Preaching: John Chrysostom and the Philosophical Tradition of Guiding Souls." In *Studia Patristica*, vol. 41, edited by F. Young, M. Edwards, and P. Parvis, papers presented at the 14th International Conference on Patristic Studies, Oxford, 2003, 463–68. Leuven: Peeters, 2006.
- . *John Chrysostom on Divine Pedagogy: The Coherence of His Theology and Preaching*, OECs. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014.
- Salem, Claire E. "Sanity, Insanity, and Man's Being as Understood by St. John Chrysostom." PhD diss., Durham University, 2010.
- Schatkin, Margaret. *John Chrysostom as Apologist, with special reference to De incomprehensibili, Quod nemo laeditur, Ad eos qui scandalizati sunt, and Adversus oppugantores vitae monasticae*, Analekta Blatadon, vol. 50. Thessaloniki: Patriarch. Hidruma Paterikon Meleton, 1987.
- Sedley, David. "Philodemus and the Decentralisation of Philosophy." *Cronache ercolanesi* 33 (2003): 31–41.
- Sorabji, Richard. *Emotion and Peace of Mind: From Stoic Agitation to Christian Temptation*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000.
- von Staden, Heinrich. "La lecture comme thérapie dans la médecine gréco-romaine." *Comptes-rendus des séances de l'Académie des Inscriptions et Belles-Lettres* 146 (2002): 803–22.
- Stephens, William Richard Wood. *Saint John Chrysostom. His Life and Times: A Sketch of the Church and the Empire in the Fourth Century*. 2nd ed. London: J. Murray, 1880.
- Tatse, Paraskeve. "Ο Απόστολος Παύλος κατά τον Άγιο Ιωάννη Χρυσόστομο." PhD diss., Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, 2008.
- Tiersch, Claudia. *Johannes Chrysostomus in Konstantinopel (398–404). Weltsicht und Wirken eines Bischofs in der Hauptstadt des Oströmischen Reiches*, STAC, Bd 6. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2002.

- Tloka, Jutta. *Griechische Christen—christliche Griechen. Plausibilierungsstrategien des antiken Christentums bei Origenes und Johannes Chrysostomos*, STAC, Bd 30. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2005.
- Tonias, Demetrios E. *Abraham in the Works of John Chrysostom*, Emerging Scholars series. Minneapolis, Minn.: Fortress Press, 2014.
- Ulrich, Jörg. "The Reception of Greek Christian Apologetics in Theodoretus' *Graecarum affectionum curatio*." In *Continuity and Discontinuity in Early Christian Apologetics*, edited by J. Ulrich, A.-C. Jacobsen, and M. Kahlos, 113–30, Early Christianity in the Context of Antiquity, vol. 5. Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 2009.
- Van Veller, Courtney Wilson. "Preaching Paul: John Chrysostom and the Construction of a Non-Jewish Christian Identity." PhD diss., Boston University, 2015.
- Viansino, Giovanni. "Aspetti dell'opera di Giovanni Crisostomo." *Koinonia* 25 (2001): 137–205.
- Voicu, Sever. "La volontà e il caso: La tipologia dei primi spuri di Crisostomo." In *Giovanni Crisostomo: Oriente e Occidente tra IV e V secolo*, xxxiii Incontro di studiosi dell'antichità Cristiana, Roma, 6–8 maggio 2004, SEAug, vol. 93, 101–18. Rome: Institutum Patristicum Augustinianum, 2005.
- Vrancx, Cornelius Columbanus. *Malleus Calvinistarum. Hoc est: Divus Joannes Chrysostomus, solus sufficienter scriptis suis retundens universas errores, quos Joannes Calvinus eiusque praecessores aut asseclae de ter venerabili Eucharistiae sacramento commenti vel secuti sunt*. Antwerp: Apud Ioannem Keerbergium, 1590.
- Weidemann, Hans-Ulrich, ed. *Asceticism and Exegesis in Early Christianity: The Reception of New Testament Texts in Ancient Ascetic Discourses*, *Novum Testamentum et Orbis Antiquus*, vol. 101. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2013.
- Wright, Jessica. "Between Despondency and the Demon: Diagnosing and Treating Spiritual Disorders in John Chrysostom's *Letter to Stageirios*." *JLA* 8 (2015): forthcoming.
- Žitnik, Maximilijan. *NHΨΙΣ: Christliche Nüchternheit nach Johannes Chrysostomus*, OCA, vol. 290. Rome: Pontificio Istituto Orientale, 2011.

**PART 3**

*The Late Antique West*





## Theory and Practice in Ambrose: *De officiis* and the Political Interventions of the Bishop of Milan

*Mary Sheather*

Ambrose's *De officiis*, modelled in form at least on Cicero's work of the same name, was written, most likely in the 380s, to give advice to his clergy on the way to perform their functions in the Italian post-Constantinian church.<sup>1</sup> In the same decade Ambrose was involved in a number of confrontations with the emperors Valentinian II and Theodosius I over issues that he believed to be connected with the church's mission and interests.<sup>2</sup> In the letters and a sermon, which narrated or were a part of his contribution to these encounters, Ambrose demonstrates the way he exercised his ministry as it related to the world at large, and justifies his position and actions.<sup>3</sup> He also proposes to the recipients behaviour that he deems appropriate for a Christian ruler.

This chapter seeks to determine to what extent the recommendations and examples put forward in the theoretical work are advocated or embodied in Ambrose's documents written from within three episodes of challenge and controversy. The reliability of Ambrose's recounting of events is not under scrutiny here. What is being investigated is how well or ill his perspective in these cases matched up with the ideal behaviour that is at the heart of his *De officiis*, and what connections, if any, may be made between these two bodies of work.

- 
- 1 Ivor J. Davidson, in his edition and translation, *Ambrose: De officiis*, 2 vols (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), 5, concludes that the likely date is "some time in the late 380s." The numbering and text of this edition will be mainly followed here. Boniface Ramsey, *Ambrose, The Early Church Fathers* (London and New York: Routledge, 1997), 60, gives a much greater range: "perhaps as early as 377 or as late as 391," but this is to discount internal evidence suggesting a later date.
  - 2 Those examined here involved disagreement over the right of one religious group or another to contested sacred space, and the respect that should or should not be accorded to this claim by a rival religious body.
  - 3 Clearly some of Ambrose's other, more theoretical, works were also inspired at least indirectly by issues deemed urgent to the Christian community of Milan and beyond. *De fide*, for example, was a response to a request by Emperor Gratian to explicate the finer points of the orthodox Nicene faith.



## 1 Episode One: The Altar of Victory Debate

The debate over the removal of the Altar of Victory in 384 was not one that began with the involvement of Ambrose. Rather, it may be seen as part of a gradual reconfiguration of the face of public religious duties in the heart of the Roman empire, along with the diminishing of the power and influence of the traditional pagan aristocracy.<sup>4</sup> Although Ambrose's intervention was not limited to that found in this sequence of letters, this exchange gives the fullest account of his reasons and actions, with an initial address to the young emperor Valentinian and a subsequent point-by-point refutation of the *Relatio* of Symmachus, although his second epistle was unnecessary as the point had been gained and the altar was not reinstalled.<sup>5</sup>

Symmachus' claims, however motivated, were ones that merited detailed analysis and refutation by Ambrose.<sup>6</sup> In dealing with the request for restoration of the altar, expounded most fully in his second letter, Ambrose focussed

---

4 Despite this shift in the religious centre of gravity, H.A. Pohlsander, "Victory: The Story of a Statue," *Historia* 18 (1969): 595, notes that "even the Christian members of that body [the imperial *consistorium*] were moved and ready to grant the request." On this see too P.R.L. Brown, "Aspects of the Christianization of the Roman Aristocracy," *JRS* 51 (1961): 1–11. That the debate over the altar, as recorded by Ambrose, has attained greater significance than it might have held at the time for all the parties concerned is suggested by Alan Cameron, *The Last Pagans of Rome* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 40: "Outside pagan senatorial circles the affair may not have been such a big deal as we tend to assume."

5 John Matthews, *Western Aristocracies and the Imperial Court 364–425*, rev. ed. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), 210–11, sees the episode "not as a directly influential factor in the Christianization of the Roman empire and governing class" nor as an overture to the attempts by Nicomachus Flavianus and Eugenius to usurp the throne, "but as an uncharacteristically lucid episode in the untidy and unplanned process by which the Roman governing classes abandoned their patronage of the old forms of religion in favour of the new."

6 François Paschoud, "Réflexions sur l'idéal religieux de Symmache," *Historia* 14 (1965): 215–35, believes that there was a mercenary motivation predominant here, although this has been questioned. See details of the discussion in Brian Croke and Jill Harries, *Religious Conflict in Fourth-Century Rome*, Sources in Ancient History (Sydney: Sydney University Press, 1982), 39, n. 22; Matthews, *Western Aristocracies*, 209; and Norman H. Baynes, "Quintus Aurelius Symmachus and the Senatorial Aristocracy of the West by John Alexander McGeachy," *JRS* 36 (1946): 175–77. For an earlier, less critical, view of Symmachus see Dwight Nelson Robinson, "An Analysis of the Pagan Revival of the Late Fourth Century, with Especial Reference to Symmachus," *TAPA* 46 (1915): 101, who sees Symmachus as one of the "loyal and zealous conservatives" who adhered to "the earlier forms of Roman worship." Cristiana Sogno, *Q. Aurelius Symmachus: A Political Biography* (Ann Arbor, Mich.: University of Michigan Press, 2006), 50, takes a different position, referring to his "unmerited reputation as a fundamentalist pagan."

on several points that he clearly regarded as significant for his argument. He argued for the moral superiority of Christian women dedicated to asceticism over the Vestal Virgins, with their supposed wealth and comfortable lifestyle, and the possibility of their leaving the life of celibacy behind after their period of service. At this point the virtue of chastity is clearly emphasised, but so too is restraint in pursuit of wealth, while it is suggested that chastity itself restrains desire for possessions—“*facultatum cupiditates*.”<sup>7</sup>

This restraint is for Ambrose a key element in the performance of *officia* as noted in *De officiis* 1.39.193, which provides a detailed account of where greed leads (cf. *De off.* 2.26.129–2.27.133 where a key feature of justice is resistance to the desire for gain). The disparaging of the pursuit of worldly goods was clearly not likely to emanate from the pen of Symmachus, but then the Christian Petronius Probus was also known for his acquisitiveness, which might well have involved him in corruption.<sup>8</sup> The difference is that while the unseemly pursuit of wealth might have brought disapproval from pagan moralists, and stern Stoics might believe that the only truly wealthy person was the wise man, the advantages of wealth were, for the most part, taken for granted. Ambrose is quite clear, at least in theory, that the only justification for wealth is the ability it bestows on the owner to assist the poor—and thus procure spiritual benefits at the hands of those being helped.<sup>9</sup>

In Ambrose's letters he claims that public expenditure on pagan institutions is wasteful, with no real impact on the community, whereas he proudly lists the ways in which money given to the church has fed the poor and ransomed captives.<sup>10</sup> This is precisely the approach taken by him in *De officiis* 2.16.78, where he dissects the desire for wealth and notes how this harms one's ability to help the weak. The reader is advised to “make sure that you are not drawing the string on the salvation of the needy when you draw the string on your purse, and that you are not burying the poor alive in there as much as you

7 Ambrose, *Ep.* 73.12 (CSEL 82/3.41). The translation is indebted to J.H.W.G. Liebeschuetz's *Ambrose of Milan: Political Letters and Speeches*, TTH, vol. 43 (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2005). *Saint Ambrose: Letters*, trans. Sr. Mary Melchior Beyenka, The Fathers of the Church, vol. 26 (Washington, D.C.: Catholic University of America Press, 1954), has also been consulted.

8 Neil B. McLynn, *Ambrose of Milan: Church and Court in a Christian Capital*, TCH, vol. 22 (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1994), 38–39; and see Ammianus Marcellinus, 14.11.25 and 31.1.1.

9 Ambrose, *De off.* 1.12.39 (Davidson, *Ambrose*, 1.138): “Ad haec plus ille tibi confert cum sit debitor salutis.”

10 Ambrose, *Ep.* 73.16 (CSEL 82/3.43–44).

would if you laid them in a tomb.”<sup>11</sup> It is doubtful however if those *peregrini* who were expelled from Rome in 384 under Symmachus’ watch during his stint as urban prefect, and who were the object of Ambrose’s reference in *De officiis* 3.7.45, were among the genuinely needy.<sup>12</sup>

In responding to claims that pagan rites had ensured Rome’s safety in the past, Ambrose attributes military success to the fighting skills of the soldiers—“strait uirtus quos religio non remouit.”<sup>13</sup> His view here differs from that assumed when advising Emperor Gratian on the benefits of the commander’s correct belief for success in battle (*De fide* 1.3)!<sup>14</sup> Citing details of Roman history to help his case that pagan Rome did not succeed because of but despite its gods, Ambrose displays his classical knowledge while using this to trump his opponent. Just as in *De officiis*, he is able to compare Roman tradition unfavourably with the new wine of the Christian message: “As for the Senones, what should I say? The remaining Romans would not even have resisted them . . . if the goose had not raised the alarm” (*Ep.* 73.5).

Ambrose sees his task as one of giving counsel on what the truly Christian emperor should do, and he shows himself a tough defender of his position, speaking out in the manner he advocated in *De officiis* 1.46.226, where he advised that one should be agreeable but not flatter. In his first letter about the altar he performs the function of a bishop in advocating on behalf of *religio* (“Conuenio fidem tuam Christi sacerdos.”),<sup>15</sup> with which the Christian faith is now equated. Diplomacy for Ambrose goes beyond the most obvious episcopal functions, however, involving interceding on behalf of Valentinian with the usurper Maximus. Such intervention accorded with the cleric’s role of preventing bloodshed, while also improving his chances of his right to a hearing on matters which he regarded as important to the church and its well-being.

11 Ambrose, *De off.* 2.16.78 (Davidson, *Ambrose*, 1.312): “Caue ne intra loculos tuos includas salutem inopum et tamquam in tumulis sepelias uitam pauperum.” André Chastagnol, review of Lellia Ruggini, *Economia e Società nell’Italia Annonaria: Rapporti fra agricoltura e commercio dal IV al VI secolo D.C.*, *JRS* 53 (1963), 210–12, notes the diminishing fortunes of the small farmers at this period, rendering this injunction particularly pertinent.

12 See Davidson, *Ambrose*, 2.844–46 on 3.49 for a discussion on the *peregrini* and on who may have ordered this expulsion.

13 Ambrose, *Ep.* 73.7 (CSEL 82/3.36).

14 And note also Ambrose, *De off.* 1.36.179 (Davidson, *Ambrose*, 1.220): “Non . . . in uiribus corporis . . . fortitudinis gloria est sed magis in uirtute animi,” which provides a different angle from the pronouncement in *Ep.* 73.7 (CSEL 82/3.36): “Non in fibris pecudum, sed in uiribus bellatorum tropaea uictoriae sunt.”

15 Ambrose, *Ep.* 72.10 (CSEL 82/3.15).

In his second letter on the topic, Ambrose claims that the imparting of the very wisdom and truth of God to Christians has itself given them the knowledge of the one right path, the point disputed by Symmachus in *Epistula* 72a.<sup>16</sup> Wisdom and knowledge are traditional and unexceptionable qualities discussed at length in *De officiis*, although their source might be disputed, but in making his claims for a hearing Ambrose also asserts in the voice of Rome personified: “Nullus pudor est ad meliora transire.”<sup>17</sup> This shows how Ambrose deals with the common accusation levelled at Christianity from its earliest days, that it was introducing novel, and therefore suspect, beliefs and practices.

This issue is also raised in *De officiis* where Ambrose’s way out of the charge that Christians were latecomers in the philosophical field was to claim the priority of Job over Plato.<sup>18</sup> In the same vein here he is the rationalist with a robust confidence in the working-out of a natural order not reliant on superstitious rites.<sup>19</sup> Ambrose was concerned to discredit the ancient religion once and for all; in his refutation he argues against the claims of tradition by pointing out examples of progress in human affairs, culminating in the advent of Christianity.<sup>20</sup> As Liebeschuetz notes, he has no difficulty in showing that Rome’s success or failure could not be correlated with whether or not piety and attention to the gods had been displayed.<sup>21</sup>

Valentinian is urged to exercise fraternal piety, which is linked to piety as such,<sup>22</sup> just as Ambrose had urged him in the preceding letter to look to Theodosius—“parentem pietatis tuae”—and had emphasised that “Nihil maius est religione, nihil sublimius fide.”<sup>23</sup> These are qualities held out for cultivation by all Ambrose’s readers, clerical and lay, and seen in the treatise as foundational for justice.<sup>24</sup> He makes the comparison explicit in *Epistula* 72.1 with language appropriate to a ruler who is also a military leader.<sup>25</sup> Conversely, dissuasion from despotic rule is also recommended to clerics in *De officiis* 2.24.120 in a description of the extremes to be avoided in discharging duties.

16 Ibid., 72a.8–10 (CSEL 82/3.26–27).

17 Ibid., 73.7 (CSEL 82/3.38).

18 Ambrose, *De off.* 1.12.44 (Davidson, *Ambrose*, 1.142) and cf. 2.2.6 (Davidson, *Ambrose*, 1.270).

19 Ambrose, *Ep.* 73.18 and 34 (CSEL 82/3.45 and 51–52).

20 Ibid., 73.23–25 (CSEL 82/3.47–48).

21 Liebeschuetz, *Ambrose of Milan*, 78. He points out, however, on 79, that, as Ambrose proceeds, “rationalism is replaced by confident assertion based on authority.”

22 Ambrose, *Ep.* 73.39 (CSEL 82/3.53): “et nunc teneas quod et fidei tuae et germanitatis necessitudini iudicas conuenire.”

23 Ibid., 72.12 (CSEL 82/3.17).

24 Ambrose, *De off.* 1.30.142 (Davidson, *Ambrose*, 1.198): “Fundamentum . . . est iustitiae fides.”

25 Idem, *Ep.* 72.1 (CSEL 82/3.11): “tum ipsi uos omnipotenti deo et sacrae fidei militatis.”

In more general terms, in this correspondence the qualities praised are chastity, restraint, and courage. These are held up as befitting a Christian community adopting and adapting the virtues of the pagan past. Ambrose expects of the young emperor at least the endorsement of these virtues as the bishop pursues his role of encouraging the exercise of piety. This is consistent with the way in which behaviour is recommended in the *De officiis*, including the focus on chastity not found in the pagan original. Such a parallel makes Ambrose's giving advice on behaviour to emperors less problematic, since for the most part the virtues expected of nobles, clerical or lay, and emperor will be the same.

The reasons why Valentinian or his advisers came down on the side of the more fervent Christians in and outside the senate are no doubt more complicated than the simple overwhelming persuasiveness or influence of Ambrose. His arguments, however, are significant in terms of where the emphasis lay in mounting the attack and what images and examples were deployed.

## 2 Episode Two: The 'Basilica' Conflict

The accounts of Ambrose's confrontation with the Arians<sup>26</sup>—perhaps more appropriately described as *homoeans*—appear in three different writings, and the precise relationship between the different events described is still a matter for dispute.<sup>27</sup> These are the letter to Emperor Valentinian (*Ep.* 75),

---

26 It is clear from earlier letters relating to the Arians, adherents of the pronouncements of the Synod of Rimini in 359, that Ambrose had already emerged as a strong upholder of the homoousian interpretation of the nature and person of Jesus Christ. In these the emphasis is on adhering to the faith, and the need for Christians to reject any deviations from ancestral practice. See esp. *Gesta concili Aquileiensis Epp.* 1 and 2 (CSEL 82/3, 315–16 and 316–25) and the *Acta* (CSEL 82/3, 325–68) for the conclusions of the council of 381 in which Ambrose took a leading role. Timothy D. Barnes, "Valentinian, Auxentius and Ambrose," *Historia* 51 (2002): 227–37, discusses the evidence for Ambrose's early doctrinal position.

27 The sequence of the 'basilica' letters as discussed follows for convenience the order of Michaela Zelzer, ed., *Sancti Ambrosii Opera*, pars x: *Epistulae et Acta*, tome 3, CSEL 82/3 (Vienna: Hoelder-Pichker-Tempskym 1982), xxxv–xxxviii, although the arrangements suggested by Liebeschuetz, *Ambrose of Milan*, and McLynn, *Ambrose of Milan*, are equally feasible. A helpful account of sources for various alternative scenarios is provided in Christine Shepardson, *Controlling Contested Places: Late Antique Antioch and the Spatial Politics of Religious Controversy* (Oakland, Calif.: University of California Press, 2014), ch. 6, and I am grateful to her for the opportunity to see the relevant sections of this work prior

the sermon against Auxentius (*Ep.* 75a), and the letter to Ambrose's sister Marcellina (*Ep.* 76). The letter to Marcellina describes the events of Holy Week at Milan in 386, covering the claim by the court for possession of the New, and then the Portian, Basilica and Ambrose's vigorous response, including preaching and the recital of psalms, and the sending of strongly-worded replies to messages from court.<sup>28</sup> His triumph, with the removal of troops surrounding the contested basilica and the lifting of penalties on his merchant supporters, is recorded with obvious pleasure but with the clear suggestion, in the exchange with Calligonus, that it may be the battle that has been won, not the war.

The letter to the emperor (*Ep.* 75) refers to the request for Ambrose to attend the consistory to debate what Ambrose regarded as matters of faith, in front of an audience of lay people who might not be orthodox believers, and in any case would not in his view be equipped to come to soundly-based conclusions. The law of January 386, penalising interference with the free exercise by Arians of their right to practise their version of Christianity, is the obvious precursor to the letter. Ambrose notes that while a synod set up to debate the issues properly, with other bishops and not laypeople, could be acceptable to him, the offending legislation would first need to be repealed.<sup>29</sup> There is a brief mention of the threat of takeover of churches by the Arians,<sup>30</sup> but Ambrose's focus is on his role as bishop and his need to defend episcopal rights, even at the risk of exile.

The sermon starts with mention of an imperial order to Ambrose to leave Milan and also of a summons to attend the royal palace.<sup>31</sup> The congregation to whom the sermon is delivered is aware that the church is surrounded, Ambrose suggests, but scripture has examples of resistance to oppression to fortify its members. Ambrose paints the effects of the law tolerating Arian worship in vivid colours (especially in sections 23–24) while the emperor is politely but firmly put in his place as outranked by “dominus Iesus.”<sup>32</sup>

The particular flavour of the episcopal function emerges more clearly in Ambrose's consideration of the economic and social factors involved in his

---

to publication. The argument here does not depend on a particular sequence of composition or dating of events.

28 The mention of an earlier Arian claim on the Portian basilica (*Ep.* 76.1 [CSEL 82/3.108]) and, in the *sermo*, of a summons in the previous year (*Ep.* 75a.29 [CSEL 82/3.101–102]), provides a sense of the way in which this conflict developed, although still leaving many questions unanswered.

29 Ambrose, *Ep.* 75.16 (CSEL 82/3.80).

30 *Ibid.*, 75.19 (CSEL 82/3.81).

31 *Ibid.*, 75a.1 and 3 (CSEL 82/3.82 and 83–84).

32 *Ibid.*, 75a.7 (CSEL 82/3.86).

confrontation. He notes in his sermon that on being asked to hand over the church plate he replied that he could not hand over anything from the temple of God, and was in fact safeguarding the salvation of the emperor by this refusal.<sup>33</sup> This may be compared with his willingness to ransom prisoners with the money obtained from melting down church plate, as noted in *De officiis* 2.28.136–38, although such apparently clear-cut ethical injunctions may there hide an Arian-Nicene dispute over property.<sup>34</sup>

In his sermon he claims that he would hand over his own land and money if these were demanded.<sup>35</sup> Such an assertion accords with the recommendation to clergy to remain content with their own property, if they had any, with the implication that they were not required to divest themselves of worldly goods when attaining priestly office.<sup>36</sup>

As guardian of the church's treasure Ambrose sees himself also as defender of the poor. In this case he considers that "The contributions of the people are amply sufficient for the poor."<sup>37</sup> Such an assessment implies that the almsgiving associated with the church will not suffer because of the confrontation. In keeping with the account of giving to the poor presented in *De officiis*,<sup>38</sup> Ambrose notes that, "The poor of Christ are my dependents/riches"—with a pun on *aerarii* and *aerarium*, as Liebeschuetz observes.<sup>39</sup> This is reinforced in the letter to Marcellina, when he writes: "everything of mine really belongs to the poor."<sup>40</sup>

In his letter to the emperor *Ep.* 75.3 Ambrose associates expressions of faith exhibited by Valentinian's father with benefits to the commonwealth.<sup>41</sup>

33 Ibid., 75a.5 (CSEL 82/3.85).

34 See on this Davidson, *Ambrose*, 2.789–93. On the various forms of such beneficence see also William Klingshirn, "Charity and Power: Caesarius of Arles and the Ransoming of Captives in Sub-Roman Gaul," *JRS* 75 (1985): 185.

35 Ambrose, *Ep.* 75a.5 (CSEL 82/3.85).

36 Ambrose, *De off.* 1.37.185 (Davidson, *Ambrose*, 1.224–26) and cf. 1.30.152 (Davidson, *Ambrose*, 1.206).

37 Ambrose, *Ep.* 75a.33 (CSEL 82/3.104): "Potest pauperibus collatio populi redundare."

38 Ambrose, *De off.* 2.21.107 (Davidson, *Ambrose*, 1.326–28): "Licet in hospite sit Christus quia Christus in paupere est."

39 Ambrose, *Ep.* 75a.33 (CSEL 82.3.105): "aerarii mei pauperes Christi sunt." Liebeschuetz, *Ambrose of Milan*, 158, n. 10. Note the similarity of this with his story of Lawrence the martyr and his true treasure, recounted in *De officiis* 2.28.140–41 (Davidson, *Ambrose*, 1.346). As his sermon continues: "munera pauperum deum obligant quia scriptum est: Qui largitur pauperi deo fenerat" (*Ep.* 75a.33).

40 Ambrose, *Ep.* 76.8 (CSEL 82/3.112): "omnia quae mea sunt essent pauperum."

41 Ibid., 75.3 (CSEL 82/3.75): "et fides confessionis constantia comprobata est et sapientia melioratae rei publicae profectibus praedicatur."



Nonetheless the distinctive roles of priest/bishop and emperor emerge most obviously in this confrontation where Ambrose appears not so much as spiritual adviser as leader of a spiritual citizenry confronting the emperor and his Arian cohort. Ambrose prefaces his comments in the sermon on complying with a request to come to the palace with the qualification “si hoc congrueret sacerdotis officio,”<sup>42</sup> but is clear on the extent of his authority when he lays out the conditions of successful rule before Valentinian, as reported to Marcellina, “If you wish to rule for any length of time, be subject to God.”<sup>43</sup>

Thus qualities recommended for clerics in *De officiis* are attributed to, or demanded of, emperors without any hint of awkwardness. It is consistent with this approach for Ambrose to suggest in the *De officiis* that lack of poise or *grauitas* may indicate a heretic in a candidate for the priesthood, thus by implication melding the qualities of a gentleman and a man of faith—and their opposites. Ambrose had indicated that a potential priest’s future Arian tendencies were detectable in his immodest—perhaps swaggering?—gait, unbefitting a genuine Christian.<sup>44</sup>

A priest however does not want encounters with imperial authority to reach a level of confrontation or to appear as the behaviour of a contumacious cleric, rather than one who is appropriately restrained.<sup>45</sup> *Contumelia* was a failing censured in *De officiis* 3.22.134, with the warning against “obiurgatio contumeliosa.” On the contrary he advises: “Accedat . . . suauis sermo”<sup>46</sup> and we note the cleric’s role of preaching desirable behaviour in a tactful manner, employing “placiditas mentis” and “animi benignitas” to gain affection.<sup>47</sup>

Here Ambrose is clearly God’s spokesman and in accordance with this conviction he is able to spell out in the sermon the limits of his obedience to such directives as handing over a basilica: “And you yourselves know that it is my way to show respect to our emperors but not to yield to them, to offer myself willingly for punishment.”<sup>48</sup> The manner of proceeding was spelled out in

42 Ibid., 75a.3 (CSEL 82/3.83).

43 Ibid., 76.19 (CSEL 82/3.119): “si uis diutius imperare esto deo subditus.”

44 Ambrose, *De off.* 1.18.72 (Davidson, *Ambrose*, 1.160).

45 See Ambrose, *Ep.* 75.9–10 (CSEL 82/3.77–78) and cf. *Ep.* 75a.18 (CSEL 82/3.93–94) for a rejection of such a description. Cf. *Ep.* 75.2 (CSEL 82/3.74), where there is the rejection of the epithet *contumax*, with *Ep.* 75a.18 (CSEL 82/3.93), containing Ambrose’s denial of behaving *contumaciter*.

46 Ambrose, *De off.* 1.47.226 (Davidson, *Ambrose*, 1.248).

47 Ibid., 2.7.29 (Davidson, *Ambrose*, 1.284).

48 Ambrose, *Ep.* 75a.2 (CSEL 82/3.83): “Scitis et uos ipsi quod imperatoribus soleam deferre non cedere, suppliciiis me libenter offerre.”



the handbook as “not over-studied but graceful.”<sup>49</sup> Ambrose asks rhetorically: “Quid igitur non humiliter responsum a nobis est?”<sup>50</sup>

This may be compared with what is perhaps the boldest account given by Ambrose of how he saw the relative roles of priest and emperor, when he recorded that, “it is commonly said that emperors aspired to priesthood rather than priests to monarchy.”<sup>51</sup> The reference is to priest-prophets bestowing imperium on kings under the old dispensation. Here the public role of the clergy, their assumption of a civic role, especially at the higher levels of the priesthood, begins to draw close the worlds of Cicero and Ambrose and give life to the transformation effected by Ambrose in his *De officiis*.<sup>52</sup>

Law as Ambrose sees it is an ambivalent term. It may refer to the law of God, in which case it must be superior to ‘your’ law, he tells the young emperor (*Ep.* 75.10), and he relates to Marcellina his rejection of the view that everything may be lawful for the emperor (*Ep.* 76.19). In a comment reminiscent of *De officiis* 1.30.142, he attributes justice in an individual to the possession of faith and not the (human) law.<sup>53</sup>

The desirable qualities of rulers or clergy as well as the pious are demonstrated by reference to models, particularly those derived from the Old Testament. Here as frequently in his handbook Ambrose brings in Job as a model of all the virtues.<sup>54</sup> In *Epistula* 75a.4 he mentions Job being tested by the devil as an example, and in *Epistula* 76.14 Job is a model of patience and courage for Ambrose’s compliant congregation to follow. The sermon refers to

49 Ambrose, *De off.* 1.23.101 (Davidson, *Ambrose*, 1.176): “non adfectata elegantia sed non intermissa gratia.”

50 Ambrose, *Ep.* 75a.33 (CSEL 82/3.104). Such an emphasis, in combination with the frequent rejection of the term *tyrannus*, may suggest a concern to dispel assumptions about overweening ecclesiastical authority.

51 *Ibid.*, 76.23 (CSEL 82/3.122): “et uulgo dici quod imperatores sacerdotium magis optauerint quam imperium sacerdotes.” Cf. 75a.18 (CSEL 82/3.94): “Respondi ego quod sacerdotis est; quod imperatoris est faciat imperator.”

52 An instance of Ambrose’s interpretation of his episcopal role in broad terms emerges when he notes the case of a widow whose property, deposited with the church for safe-keeping, was at risk of being removed by a state-sanctioned action (*De off.* 2.29.150 [Davidson, *Ambrose*, 1.350]). His timely intervention ensured that the widow—and ultimately the church?—retained possession. See on this case Davidson, *Ambrose*, 2.796–98.

53 Ambrose, *Ep.* 75a.24 (CSEL 82/3.98). See 75a.28 (CSEL 82/3.101) on the *lex diuina* and *lex humana*.

54 The most comprehensive laudatory note is at *De off.* 1.40.195 (Davidson, *Ambrose*, 1.230). Davidson, *Ambrose*, 2.624, observes that “Job is the main replacement for Cic’s *exempla* from Greek and Roman history.”

servants of God being protected more by those they cannot see than those that are visible—with a mention of Elisha as an example of one who was shielded in this way.<sup>55</sup> Later Ambrose introduces Naboth and the incident of the vineyard and pointedly notes how in that case the demand of the king was illegal.<sup>56</sup> This was also a reference used by Ambrose in the *De officiis* to point out the true riches unknown to those coveting the property of others.<sup>57</sup> The basilica, it is implied, is not the emperor's to use or hand over as he, or his mother, sees fit.<sup>58</sup>

The penalties imposed on traders who supported Ambrose are one factor in the contest.<sup>59</sup> In having these revoked,<sup>60</sup> Ambrose both demonstrates his triumph and his concern for the welfare of his flock and the maintenance of order, though such concern was not so much in evidence in criticism of the merchant class in *De officiis* (e.g. 1.49.243).

One clear difference from the approach taken by Ambrose in his handbook for priests is that here the references to females are universally negative, no doubt in view of the negative role Ambrose saw displayed in Justina, the emperor's Arian-leaning mother.<sup>61</sup> Thus Eve, Jezebel in a contest with Elijah and as persecutor of Naboth, and Herodias are brought forward as warnings of the evils wrought by females.<sup>62</sup> The combination of the female Justina and the unruly Goths is especially potent as an image of danger to faith and custom.<sup>63</sup> Clearly Ambrose would have looked for ammunition against anyone close to imperial power who held what he regarded as heretical beliefs. In this case, however, the fact that it is a woman wielding malign influence is an added affront to right order.

In the record of the synod of Aquileia of 381, which provided the background to the 'basilica' dispute, Ambrose had sought to emphasise that the precepts of ancestors—assumed to endorse adherence to the faith in full orthodoxy—should not be departed from, on pain of committing impiety and being sacrilegious.<sup>64</sup> Although Ambrose in his letters introduces an ethical stance that does not depend in any obvious way on the values of Rome's pagan past,

55 Ambrose, *Ep.* 75a.11 (CSEL 82/3.88).

56 *Ibid.*, 75a.17 (CSEL 82/3.92–93).

57 Ambrose, *De off.* 2.5.17 (Davidson, *Ambrose*, 1.276).

58 Ambrose, *Ep.* 76.22 (CSEL 82/3.121–22).

59 *Ibid.*, 76.6 (CSEL 82/3.111): "corpus omne mercatorum."

60 *Ibid.*, 76.26 (CSEL 82/3.124).

61 *Ibid.*, 76.12 (CSEL 82/3.114): "femina ista."

62 *Ibid.*, 76.17–18 (CSEL 82/3.117–18); and 75a.17 (CSEL 82/3.92–93).

63 *Ibid.*, 76.12 (CSEL 82/3.114).

64 *Gesta concilii Aquileiensis Ep.* 2.3 (CSEL 82/3.318–19).

there is a degree of ambivalence here. This is shown perhaps most particularly in his references to the Goths, denounced as Arians, but also fit subjects for disparagement as wagon-dwelling barbarians, a judgement that sits more easily with the Roman citizen than the Christian.<sup>65</sup>

In an aside (*Ep.* 76.9), Ambrose appears concerned about a possible conflagration which might affect the fate of Italy and thus addresses Goth tribunes, asking: “‘Was it for this that the Roman Empire admitted you, that you should offer yourselves as agents for the promotion of civil strife?’”<sup>66</sup> In *Epistula* 75 foreigners (i.e. Goths) are seen as likely enemies of true faith, fit associates of Auxentius.<sup>67</sup> The height of alarm is reached in *Epistula* 76: “And heathens did indeed come, and very much worse than heathens: for it was Goths who came, and men of a variety of foreign tribes,” i.e. to occupy the basilica.<sup>68</sup>

In his theoretical work, Ambrose took a rather different line on dealing with outsiders. While he regarded preserving one’s country from barbarians as a virtue,<sup>69</sup> he also insisted on the duty or benefit of being friendly to strangers, although here he added little to what Cicero had already put forward on hospitality, and excluded those plotting against their country or the church or grasping at the goods of those in need.<sup>70</sup>

What Ambrose accomplished in his representation of his role as bishop in this case was a hardening of the battlelines. How dangerous his position became in the course of the confrontation is hard to ascertain, although from his letters he appears to have been prepared for martyrdom over this issue. Whether the basilica itself was the tipping point or merely an excuse for confrontation is again disputed. The tone of these writings suggests a churchman complying, as he would see it, with the injunctions of his treatise and addressing others who, while not having the same *officia* imposed on them, are amenable to similar ethical and ecclesiastical exhortations.

65 Ambrose, *Ep.* 76.12 (CSEL 82/3.114).

66 Ibid., 76.9 (CSEL 82/3.113): “‘Propterea uos possessio Romana suscepit ut perturbationis publicae uos praebeat is ministros?’”

67 Ibid., 75.8 (CSEL 82/3.77).

68 Ibid., 76.20 (CEL 82/3.120): “Et re uera uenerunt gentes et plus etiam quam gentes uenerunt, uenerunt enim Gothi et diuersarum nationum uiri.”

69 Ambrose, *De off.* 1.50.254 (Davidson, *Ambrose*, 1.264), on not keeping faith with traitors. See also *De off.* 2.28.136 (Davidson, *Ambrose*, 1.342), for the association of barbarians and violation.

70 Ibid., 1.32.167 (Davidson, *Ambrose*, 1.214); 2.21.103 (Davidson, *Ambrose*, 1.326); 3.7.45 (Davidson, *Ambrose*, 1.380–82); and 1.30.144 (Davidson, *Ambrose*, 1.200). Davidson, *Ambrose*, 2.584, notes of Ambrose: “Heresies . . . are synonymous with barbarism . . . Heresy and treason are all of a piece.”

### 3 Episode Three: Synagogue Burning at Callinicum

In the episode of the burning of the synagogue, covered in Ambrose's letter to his sister Marcellina (*Ep. extra coll.* 1) and to Emperor Theodosius (*Ep.* 74 and *Ep. extra coll.* 1a),<sup>71</sup> Ambrose appears at his most intrusive.<sup>72</sup> In both epistles, with their sometimes confusing sequence of ideas, Ambrose nonetheless makes appeals to values that are assumed to be shared. The destruction of the synagogue in 388 by Christian fanatics may have been an event occurring well outside Ambrose's episcopal jurisdiction, but as Liebeschuetz notes this did not prevent his intervention—"deploying his rhetorical armoury" to argue that "the Christian state must not assist non-Christian worship in any way, not even to the extent of giving it the protection of the law."<sup>73</sup> The efficacy of the letter to the emperor may, however, have been overrated, as it appears from *Epistula* 74.9 that Theodosius' order for the synagogue to be rebuilt was rescinded by the time it was written.<sup>74</sup>

In this account of events, Ambrose is careful to detail those qualities most valuable in monarchs, which Theodosius, the recipient of the letter of advice and the subject of Ambrose's account to his sister Marcellina, is either assumed to possess—hence his receptivity to suggestions—or is urged to acquire for his soul's sake. As in *De officiis* the biblical examples support the message. Thus here Ambrose shows Ezekiel speaking out for the lord before kings (Ezek 3:17), and notes that "no quality is so popular and loveable in you who are emperors as your cherishing of freedom"—which means that desirable characteristics of ruler and priest neatly intersect: "neque imperiale est libertatem dicendi neque neque sacerdotale quod sentiat non dicere."<sup>75</sup>

71 The text of the letter to the emperor appears without its dramatic final paragraph in the version *extra collectionem*. On this see Zelzer, *Sancti Ambrosi opera*, xxi–xxiii.

72 As Ramsey, *Ambrose*, 35, notes, the words in this correspondence "put Ambrose in the worst possible light." See also on this H.A. Drake, *Constantine and the Bishops: The Politics of Intolerance* (Baltimore and London: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2000), 444, noting, in discussion on the censure over Thessalonica, the "morally more ambiguous" role played by Ambrose in this episode.

73 Liebeschuetz, *Ambrose of Milan*, 96 (and cf. 18), where he notes that what Ambrose demanded was "absolutely contrary to Roman administrative tradition."

74 Pointed out, for example, by Liebeschuetz, *Ambrose of Milan*, 96; and McLynn, *Ambrose of Milan*, 300.

75 Ambrose, *Ep.* 74.2 (CSEL 82/3:55): "Nihil . . . in uobis imperatoribus tam populare et tam amabile est quam libertatem . . . diligere." Cf. 74.3 (CSEL 82/3:56): "clementiae tuae displicere debet sacerdotis silentium, libertas placere."

We know from the handbook that the speech of a priest, making representations covering the themes of *disceptatio iustitiae* and *adhortatio diligentiae*, should be “mitis et placidus”,<sup>76</sup> and he should refrain from bursting into speech in indignation and anger.<sup>77</sup> Ambrose’s characterisation of Theodosius uses similar terms of value—he knew him to be “devoted, clement, gentle and calm, having the faith and fear of the Lord” in his heart (*Ep.* 74.5)—and he refers favourably to his “devotion towards God” as well as his “mildness towards men.”<sup>78</sup> This implied receptiveness to moral suasion enables Ambrose to fulfil a role laid down for his brother clerics, giving advice initially in private according to biblical injunctions,<sup>79</sup> and suggests that the recommendation for rulers to exercise affability will be heeded.<sup>80</sup>

In these letters to and about Theodosius, there is a shift in the virtues highlighted and the way they are discussed. Ambrose often suggests that Christian faith and the love that accompanies it give Christianity the edge when it comes to assessing the virtues advocated by pagan and Christian. In this case, however, he uses this focus to present the case for the overlooking of a crime, not only by the exercising of imperial forgiveness for arson, but also by the abandonment of any demand for restitution.

Rather than interfering where he ought not, Ambrose asserts that “debitis obtempero, mandatis dei nostri oboedio”,<sup>81</sup> in a tone reminiscent of aspects of the basilica debate and the focus there on the divine law which must ultimately prevail.<sup>82</sup> With the parallel of secular and sacred service, invoked later in the letter to the emperor,<sup>83</sup> it is suggested that comparing military and priestly functions is valid, a view implied by the motivation behind the composition of *De officiis*. Thus: “Illi autem praesentibus, nos futuris militamus.”<sup>84</sup>

76 Ambrose, *De Off.* 1.22.99–1.23.101 (Davidson, *Ambrose*, 1.174–76).

77 *Ibid.*, 1.4.14 (Davidson, *Ambrose*, 1.124–26).

78 Ambrose, *Ep.* 74.5 (CSEL 82/3.57): “pium clementem mitem atque tranquillum, fidem ac timorem domini . . . pietatem tuam erga deum, lenitatem in homines.”

79 Ambrose, *De off.* 2.8.41–47 (Davidson, *Ambrose*, 1.290–94).

80 *Ibid.*, 2.7.30 (Davidson, *Ambrose*, 1.284).

81 Ambrose, *Ep.* 74.3 (CSEL 82/3.56).

82 *Ibid.*, 75a.5 (CSEL 82/3.84–85); and 75.10 (CSEL 82/3.78).

83 *Ibid.*, 74.29 (CSEL 82/3.71–72).

84 Ambrose, *De off.* 1.45.218 (Davidson, *Ambrose*, 1.242). See also *De off.* 1.37.185 (Davidson, *Ambrose*, 1.224) and the reference to those “qui fidei exercent militiam.” That this language suggests a way of approaching Theodosius on apparently equal terms emerges in *Ep.* 74.4 (CSEL 82/3.57), with the references to office, rank, and service (*officium*, *ordo*, and *militia*).

Ambrose notes that if he were speaking of political issues “although justice is to be preserved in that area as well” (an interesting concession) he “would not be gripped by such anxiety” if his words were not heeded.<sup>85</sup> However, in the case under discussion a bishop is precisely the person who should speak, he suggests. This is given a different turn a little later where Ambrose expresses his fear that his reticence may cause Theodosius to fall into sin. The distinction between properly political and ecclesiastical issues is an interesting one since here, and in the previous letters considered, ‘church matters’ are very much to do with the institution and its right to be heard as the voice of the true faith, whether in conflict with pagan, heretic, or Jew. Ethical implications of the gospel are brought in as accompanying arguments, in this case to urge the *overlooking* of what is seen as a justified act of violence, not for their own sake.

In arguing against the rebuilding of the synagogue at the expense of Christians Ambrose, in a display of knowledge of classical history befitting the author of *De officiis*, makes use of an analogy from Roman history, for once bypassing Old Testament parallels. He notes that the booty of the Cimbri—defeated by the Romans—went towards the building of Roman temples. The suggestion he puts forward is that if the synagogue were to be rebuilt it too could be regarded as built from the spoils of the Christians, a disgrace as well as an act supporting false belief.<sup>86</sup> This implies that such an act would be tantamount to granting the Jews a military victory.

Ambrose weighs the argument in his favour by implying that *ratio disciplinae*, which may be the concern of Theodosius as a ruler tasked with imposing order, should yield to religion, *censura* to *deuotio*.<sup>87</sup> Arson in this case, it is implied, is as forgivable as the burning of the house of the prefect in Rome, condoned when that was presumably prompted by misgovernment, especially in time of famine.<sup>88</sup>

Toward the end of his exhortation, Ambrose reverts to good effect to the familiar example of David, this time being counselled by Nathan on where his true strength lay (2 Sam 12:7–9). So too the army of Theodosius was victorious over the forces of Maximus, since the ‘loyalty, calm and concord’ fostered in the disparate forces of Theodosius’ army were at divine urging, and could

85 Ambrose, *Ep.* 74.4 (CSEL 82/3.57): “quamuis etiam illic iustitia seruanda sit non tanto astringar metu.”

86 *Ibid.*, 74.10 (CSEL 82/3.60–61).

87 *Ibid.*, 74.11 (CSEL 82/3.61).

88 See Liebeschuetz, *Ambrose of Milan*, 101, n. 9, with reference to *De off.* 3.7.45–46 and the possible triggers for violence.

prevail over a ruler who listened to appeals for synagogue restoration.<sup>89</sup> The account of John the Baptist speaking out to Herod of his sin, as a prophet was required to do even before a monarch, was the example presented in *De officiis* 3.14.89 of plain speaking, with less happy results.

In freeing people from exile, prison or death, Ambrose goes on to remind the emperor, qualities of benignity and forgiveness were displayed by Theodosius at the archbishop's request, a union of churchman and statesman in virtuous actions which he puts forward as a model.<sup>90</sup> It is, however, the emperor's spiritual as well as temporal health (*salus*) that he highlights as prompting his intervention on this occasion. Even while Ambrose had scorned Cicero's concern for the *utile*, in *De officiis* 2.21.102–103 he noted the advantage for one's reputation of beneficence displayed in such actions as rescuing a needy person from the hands of the powerful or saving from death one who has been condemned. There is an irony here in that the *potentes* from whom the innocent are being saved would at the highest level be the emperor himself and his entourage!

When Ambrose described to his sister his confrontation with Theodosius over the synagogue issue (*Ep. extra coll.* 1) he sent her a copy of his sermon which makes special reference to Luke 7:36–50, and in which the motif of forgiveness appears throughout. The forgiveness extended by Jesus to the woman who anointed his feet is put forward as an example of motivation by benefits and unmerited grace rather than by terror (s.6). Later he turns aside from his comparison of the synagogue, lacking the oil of forgiveness, and the church, which has it to dispense, to note that rich and poor are alike entitled to such consideration (s.22).

As in the letter to Theodosius, Ambrose introduces King David to note his hearkening to the advice of the prophet Nathan.<sup>91</sup> In the encounter with the emperor after the delivery of his sermon, Ambrose emphasizes his concern for the emperor's spiritual welfare, an approach clearly designed to deflect criticism of his temerity, but also to justify his special role as adviser.<sup>92</sup> Urging the emperor to reverse his judgement was comparable to Ambrose's advice in *De officiis* 1.50.254 where changing a wrong decision is shown as justifiable.

Civic duties are regarded as in competition with the priestly role in an aside in the letter to the emperor, which takes Ambrose off the track of his main message, but is clearly a matter of concern to him, in line with his very broad

---

89 Ambrose, *Ep.* 74.22–23 (CSEL 82/3.67–69).

90 *Ibid.*, 74.25 (CSEL 82/3.70).

91 Ambrose, *Ep. extra coll.* 1.25 (CSEL 82/3.159).

92 *Ibid.*, 1.27 (CSEL 82/3.160–61).



and general complaints of abuse of clergy by imperial authorities.<sup>93</sup> Ambrose here once again shows himself cultivating the qualities recommended in *De officiis* in his role as counsellor, speaking truth, as he sees it, to power, rather than to one's clerical friend, as in the scenario in *De officiis*. The predominant image of virtue or attentiveness to advice is biblical, while the classical allusion in the letter to Theodosius is reminiscent of Ambrose's comfortable interweaving of Christian counsel onto Cicero's template.

Virtues appropriate for the king may be compared with those recommended for clergy. The qualities of clemency and moderation are, after faith, the ones most highlighted. That these need to be emphasised illustrates the fact that, in an absolute monarchy, the exercise of these virtues is the only real safeguard against abuse of power. Laws exist, but their harshness may give the ruler much leeway and in the last analysis they may, if circumstances dictate, be disregarded or overturned.

#### 4 Conclusion

Ambrose as bishop was able to negotiate the sometimes tricky waters of episcopal duties in most cases with aplomb. His advice to emperors, as suggested above, shows the adroitness and self-confidence of a former civil servant, now engaged in applying new and sometimes old principles to daily exigencies. For the most part his actions and the models he proposes do not conflict with his theoretical treatise, partly because the interpretation of desirable qualities in a particular situation, as over the Callinicum synagogue, is shaped to fit the current problem. There are nevertheless some references to specific events in *De officiis* where Ambrose illustrates good or bad behaviour with examples from his own domain, and he is not averse to offering proposals which, while according with virtue, will also win approval at large.

The treatise has a larger vision of humanity, and lays greater emphasis on the theological basis for extending care to the deprived, than do the letters examined here. Ambrose's application of maxims to specific situations would appear to modern, and perhaps in part to ancient, readers as idiosyncratic and at times regrettable. There is not, however, such a degree of disparity to be found as to make Ambrose appear inconsistent in how he revealed himself through his letters exercising his episcopal functions and instructing his rulers in their duty. His Christian version of Cicero differed in spirit from the original, but the advice for clerics in authority at times betrays Ambrose the

---

93 Ambrose, *Ep.* 74.29 (CSEL 82/3.71–72).



civil administrator as much as the spiritual adviser. That clergy serve their own *imperator* (*De off.* 1.37.186) reinforces even as it subtly challenges the model of Roman bureaucracy.<sup>94</sup>

## Bibliography

- Ambrose. *De officiis* (Ivor J. Davidson, ed., *Ambrose: De officiis*, 2 vols. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001).
- . *Epistulae* (Michaela Zelzer, ed., *Sancti Ambrosii opera*, pars x: *Epistulae et Acta*, tome 3, CSEL, vol. 82/3. Vienna: Hoelder–Pichler–Tempesky, 1982. English translation in Mary Melchior Beyenka, *Saint Ambrose: Letters*, Fathers of the Church, vol. 26. Washington, D.C.: Catholic University of America Press, 1954).
- Barnes, Timothy, D. “Valentinian, Auxentius and Ambrose.” *Historia* 51 (2002): 227–37.
- Baynes, Norman H. “Quintus Aurelius Symmachus and the Senatorial Aristocracy of the West by John Alexander McGeachy.” *JRS* 36 (1946): 173–77.
- Bowersock, G.W. “From Emperor to Bishop: The Self-Conscious Transformation of Political Power in the Fourth Century AD” *CPh* 81 (1986): 298–307.
- Brown, P.R.L. “Aspects of the Christianization of the Roman Aristocracy.” *JRS* 51 (1961): 1–11.
- Cameron, Alan. *The Last Pagans of Rome*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011.
- Chastagnol, André. Review of Lellia Ruggini, *Economia e Società nell’Italia Annonaria: Rapporti fra agricoltura e commercio dal IV al VI secolo D.C.*, *JRS* 53(1963): 210–12.
- Croke, Brian, and Jill Harries. *Religious Conflict in Fourth-Century Rome*, Sources in Ancient History. Sydney: Sydney University Press, 1982.
- Drake, H.A. *Constantine and the Bishops: The Politics of Intolerance*. Baltimore and London: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2000.
- Klingshirn, William. “Charity and Power: Caesarius of Arles and the Ransoming of Captives in Sub-Roman Gaul.” *JRS* 75(1985): 183–203.
- Liebeschuetz, J.H.W.G., and Carole Hill. *Ambrose of Milan: Political Letters and Speeches*, TTH, vol. 43. Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2005.
- McLynn, Neil B. *Ambrose of Milan: Church and Court in a Christian Capital*, TCH, vol. 22. Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1994.
- Matthews, John. *Western Aristocracies and the Imperial Court 364–425*. Rev. ed. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998.

94 The advice given in *De off.* 2.14.67 (Davidson, *Ambrose*, 1.304), so suited to a political context, illustrates this well. See also G.W. Bowersock, “From Emperor to Bishop: The Self-Conscious Transformation of Political Power in the Fourth Century AD,” *CPh* 81 (1986): 298–307.

- Paschoud, François. "Réflexions sur l'idéal religieux de Symmachus." *Historia* 14 (1965): 215–35.
- Pohlsander, H.A. "Victory: The Story of a Statue." *Historia* 18 (1969): 588–97.
- Ramsey, Boniface. *Ambrose, The Early Church Fathers*. London and New York: Routledge, 1997.
- Robinson, Dwight Nelson. "An Analysis of the Pagan Revival of the Late Fourth Century, with Especial Reference to Symmachus." *TAPA* 46 (1915): 87–101.
- Shepardson, Christine. *Controlling Contested Places: Late Antique Antioch and the Spatial Politics of Religious Controversy*. Oakland, Calif.: University of California Press, 2014.
- Sogno, Cristiana. *Q. Aurelius Symmachus: A Political Biography*. Ann Arbor, Mich.: University of Michigan Press, 2006.

## Jerome as Priest, Exegete, and ‘Man of the Church’

*Philip Rousseau*

There is a Jerome who remains immovably significant in the eyes of the honest observer. His idiosyncratic ‘identity’—so deliberately maintained, so resolutely resistant to category or expectation—redeems him precisely from embittered isolation and snatches him away across the centuries from the limitations of a ‘difficult’ temperament. There is a risk of misjudging, however, such release from circumstance: we have to define carefully his relevance to our own times. A scholar beyond doubt, it is hard to see him as a saint; scarcely likeable, he is not even obviously a model.<sup>1</sup> We tend to overlook his belligerent contempt by concentrating on his brilliant erudition, his eye for detail, his fearless skill in disclosing hypocrisy or careless thought. In doing so, however, we lock him away in books, his own included; we feel less of a need to respect his varied experience, his unsettled, rough-surfaced and shifting persona. Our bound editions and our learned reflections upon them lull us into thinking that we know him by heart, so that he does not blunder around dangerously in our own world. My argument here, by contrast, is that we should let him do so, let him out of his bookish cage. His voice is not and should not be silenced. It is as if, on an instrument not quite in the best of condition, we still hear music of great beauty, which commands as much as it captivates. That is the Jerome I want to identify: a figure of contemporary value; a critic, certainly, and learned; but

---

1 The best studies may compound a sense of distance by their attention to context: the still indispensable Ferdinand Cavallera, *Saint Jérôme: Sa vie et son oeuvre*, Spicilegium Sacrum Lovaniense Études et Documents, fasc. 1–2 (Louvain: ‘Spicilegium Sacrum Lovaniense’ Bureaux, 1922); Stefan Rebenich, *Hieronymus und sein Kreis: prosopographische und sozialgeschichtliche Untersuchungen*, Historia-Einzelschriften, Bd 72 (Stuttgart: Steiner, 1992); the numerous papers by the late Yves-Marie Duval; Yves-Marie Duval, ed., *Jérôme entre l’Occident et l’Orient*. xvi<sup>e</sup> centenaire du départ de saint Jérôme de Rome et de son installation à Bethléem. Actes du colloque de Chantilly, Septembre 1986, CEASA, vol. 122 (Paris: Études Augustiniennes, 1988); and the steadily engaging Megan Hale Williams, *The Monk and the Book: Jerome and the Making of Christian Scholarship* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2006). See also my “Jerome’s Search for Self-Identity,” in *Prayer and Spirituality in the Early Church*, vol. 1, ed. Pauline Allen, Raymond Canning, and Lawrence Cross (Brisbane: Centre for Early Christian Studies, 1998), 125–42.

above all a man of feeling and insight, who broke through the impedimenta of conformity.

Let me survey briefly how I think this might be done. We look first at Jerome the priest—the critic of priests and of priesthood itself as understood by many in his day. The ordained Jerome was paradoxical in his *esprit de corps*, sparing little venom for the bulk of his peers; but, while we are familiar with the satire thus unleashed, we may underestimate the commitment to reform—to the clear notion of a figure needed in the church, whom Jerome called the *ecclesiasticus uir*, the 'man of the church'. Second, we try to identify the sphere of such a man's activity, which had much to do with interpreting scripture but also with identifying and uprooting heresy. Jerome clearly thought of himself as an *ecclesiasticus uir*, possessing the right to argue theological issues without exposing himself to the bullying or shallow-mindedness of the theologically self-righteous. This called for a forum difficult to define and a privilege even harder to preserve. Then comes a third level, that of a man possessed of an intimacy with what Jerome called the *sensus* of the text; a level of understanding that brought him close to the text's creator. Something of priesthood is retained, but this ever more richly conceived churchman becomes essentially a seer, with the instincts of prophet and poet.

Priesthood need not detain us long. We take easy delight in Jerome's brilliant caricatures of clerical pretension, brazenly directed against men who mirrored his own attendance upon the households of the Christian élite in Rome. They were, indeed, competitors, and had to contend not only with Jerome himself (the confidant of Bishop Damasus) but also with less obviously priestly exemplars like Pelagius. It was still difficult to settle into a pastoral role as yet unstable in the 370s and 380s. Effete, high-falutin' and over-sexed some of them might have been, but those priests had a job to do, at a time when religious leadership was ripe for opportunistic seizure. Jerome did not like that world very much, and was never seriously intent upon playing a role on such a stage. The 'church' in its more dramatic splendour could boast of a new 'history' since the interventions of Constantine; but Jerome thought poorly of its representative value. He betrays at any number of points in his corpus his disquiet at the tenor of the post-Constantinian church. Writing its history might prove interesting, but in the end he regretted its most recent growth in power and wealth and its accompanying decline in virtue.<sup>2</sup>

We are right, nevertheless, to find his behaviour odd. With Arianism riding high, his acceptance of ordination at the hands of the orthodox Paulinus of Antioch in the late 370s must have appeared pig-headed and partisan,

2 Jerome, *VM* 1.3 (SC 508.186): "potentia quidem et diuitiis maior, sed uirtutibus minor facta sit."

especially when he clearly had no intention of submitting himself to the authority of a particular bishop. Yet, that does actually help us to make sense of two aspects of his career. First, his attacks on some priests as little better than obsequious or grasping clients suggests that he found his own intimate counsel a more acceptable pastoral model, and hints at the feeling that serious Christianisation was not necessarily going on in churches under the guidance of priests. Not that we should imagine him thrust to the margin in some ill-kempt mob of *maquisards*.<sup>3</sup> There was *ordo* in the church, but it was measured “according to the difference of the tasks assigned”—to bishops, priests, and other ranks.<sup>4</sup> So, to be *within* the church was essential to the acquisition and exercise of authentic virtue. And that church was not just a set of buildings and ceremonies: it rested on an *ecclesia domestica*, a scattering of pious households committed to prayer, simplicity of life, and hospitality to the earnest and the needy. Much of the homiletic material of the period is visibly concerned with securing a nexus between the one and the other.<sup>5</sup> It was not just a question of catechesis, or of policing morals and wholesome observance (unsullied by pagan reminiscence, habit, or relapse): it represented precisely the ground across which *ecclesiastici uiri* might be seen to move.

Jerome’s stance also makes sense, second, of his famous assertion, *non omnes episcopi episcopi* (“not all bishops are bishops”), addressed, ironically, to Heliodorus, who later became bishop of Altinum. But here in the early 370s, Jerome is exhorting his friend not to abandon a primary commitment to the ascetic life, and he ends the same sentence with a characteristic and barbed recommendation: “probet se unusquisque, et sic accedat.” You had to show yourself a Christian *first*, without any help from *dignitas*.<sup>6</sup> Clerical office, in other words, could never be a backdoor way of easing yourself into a Christian vocation. And in any case, the career of a clergyman was not only still an ill-

3 He wanted, for example, to see the clergy decently dressed, at least *in administratione sacrificiorum*. Indeed, he warned (as he had Eustochium when younger) not only clerics but also monks, widows and virgins not to let ordinary people catch them in dirty or torn attire, *Dial. adu. Pelag.* 1.30 (CCL 80.38). See Jerome, *Ep.* 22.27 (CSEL 54.182–84).

4 Jerome, *Apol. adu. Ruf.* 1.23 (CCL 79.23): “ordo dignitatum ex laboris uarietate.”

5 See my “Homily and Asceticism in the North Italian Episcopate,” in *Chromatius of Aquileia and his Age*, ed. Pier Franco Beatrice and Alessio Peršić (Turnhout: Brepols, 2011), 145–61.

6 Jerome, *Ep.* 14.9 (CSEL 54.58): “Non facit ecclesiastica dignitas Christianum.” Cf. *Ep.* 48.4 (CSEL 54.349) (to Pammachius): “Minus est tenere sacerdotium quam mereri.” I suspect a link in Jerome’s mind between this sentiment and his frequent use in commentaries of such phrases as *unusquisque in suo sensu abundet*—e.g., Jerome, *Comm. in Hier.* 4.15 (CCL 74.186)—the common element being the allowance of personal choice, which others are then equally free to assess.

defined commitment, even at episcopal level: it was also dangerous. "Non est facile stare loco Pauli"—that was bad enough—but bishops were being murdered in the streets in the fourth century. Ascetics stuck their necks out and took risks; but judgement at their expense was considerably less fearful than that faced by a false priest: "If a monk falls, the priest will intercede on his behalf; but if a priest should slip, who will intercede for him?"<sup>7</sup>

This says something rather sharp about the likely placement of serious Christian effort in the fourth-century 'communities of the blessed'.<sup>8</sup> Not only did some bishops fail to come up to the mark: the whole clerical body was far from assured in its virtue, and therefore in its effectiveness. It does not matter whether that was due to the temptations of post-Constantinian 'success' or to sheer confusion as to what bishops and priests were supposed to be doing. So, we can afford to be less impressed by Jerome's wit, criticising brilliantly the Roman clergy of his time. More important is the suggestion, made at calculated length, that there were alternative ways of doing the church's work. This is where we need to exercise our imaginations (as well as make proper use of our critical caution) and see Jerome, returned to Damasus' city, on the one hand disgusted by the behaviour of some pastors, but on the other having the gall to propagate a 'rightly' conceived (in his eyes) and passionate set of moral recommendations for anyone who would take their religion seriously. No wonder they slung him out, that 'Pharisaic assembly', as he called them; but the striking thing is that he was there to be slung out in the first place. It is hard to believe that he fitted into all the pastoral venues and exercises now approved and enabled by the toleration and endowment of the Christian empire; but he was hardly unique. The contradiction thus suggested more or less defined his argument with Jovinian;<sup>9</sup> and such mutual suspicions and rivalries were bedevilling the sociology of the church in more or less every major city possessed of a substantial Christian population.

The fact is, we still have a rather hazy notion of the topography of Christianisation. We know about the building boom that followed upon toleration and imperial patronage. I have also mentioned the *ecclesia domestica*—the 'pious household'. But, if there was some organic exchange between them, where did the pastoral bridge-builders gather and thrash out their ideas?

7 Jerome, *Ep.* 14.9 (CSEL 54:59): "Monachus si ceciderit rogabit pro eo sacerdos; pro sacerdotis lapsu quis rogaturus est?" It is not impossible that *sacerdos* here means 'bishop'.

8 Mark Humphries, *Communities of the Blessed: Social Environment and Religious Change in Northern Italy, AD 200–400* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999).

9 For context and implications see David G. Hunter, *Marriage, Celibacy, and Heresy in Ancient Christianity: The Jovinianist Controversy*, OBCS (Oxford University Press, 2007).

The odds had been stacked against speculation. Gatherings of churchmen ('councils') under political patronage and control had literally laid down the law on doctrine since Nicaea; disagreements had blossomed into disgrace, exile, even bloodshed. But Christianisation of the mind depended in practice on secure and less obtrusive venues in a very public society. The rural retreat, with its potential for provincial dinner-parties, elegantly stocked libraries, and long weekends, was obviously important, and prominent in the literature—think even of Jerome at Maronia with Evagrius (of Antioch), and of Augustine at Cassiciacum. But the schooling of the Christian élite was conducted more in the world of Ed Watts,<sup>10</sup> a hubbub of rooms and arcades much fought over, and suburban walks and generously loaned-out gardens (and of course tea-parties on the Aventine). Christians might also garner theological advantage even from their visits to (or more frequently their reading about) scattered 'holy men'.<sup>11</sup> We need to watch carefully, in other words, for the varied encouragement of sheer 'conversation' and the securing of an opportunity to present it, without the subsequent mischief of the dimmer-witted eavesdropper rushing abroad with the scandalous news.

I think what we observe here is the search—certainly on Jerome's part, but also on the part of others—for a type of spiritual leadership that was informed, integrated, and intense, while not content merely with governance, the dispensing of the sacraments, and homiletic address. Such an assertion brings us out onto a very broad stage, which we do not always view with a clear eye. Basically, we are in too much of a hurry to see Christianity 'established'. We argue about what such a word might mean; but our very disagreement should reinforce a sense that few Christians, even at the end of the fourth century, really understood what 'toleration' or a *respublica Christiana* was going to mean for them in the foreseeable future. The buildings had been run up, the books

---

10 Edward J. Watts, *City and School in Late Antique Athens and Alexandria* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2006).

11 Georgia Frank has famously set the reading in its place, *The Memory of the Eyes: Pilgrims to Living Saints in Christian Late Antiquity* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2000), following in the steps of Evelyne Patlagean, "Ancienne hagiographie byzantine et histoire sociale," *Annales* 23 (1968): 106–26 (English trans. "Ancient Byzantine Hagiography and Social History," by Jane Hodgkin in *Saints and their Cults: Studies in Religious Sociology, Folklore and History*, ed. Stephen Wilson [Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983], 101–21). But see the wider picture provided by Daniel F. Caner, *Wandering, Begging Monks: Spiritual Authority and the Promotion of Monasticism in Late Antiquity*, TCH, vol. 33 (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2002), and Jennifer L. Hevelone-Harper, *Disciples of the Desert: Monks, Laity, and Spiritual Authority in Sixth-Century Gaza* (Baltimore, Mass.: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2005).



were being written, grand careers had been laid claim to, theological traditions had been espoused or repudiated; but what Christianity actually demanded and what it might effect in society was still uncertain, or at least open to several choices. Lisa Bailey's 'quiet success' had yet to become obvious.<sup>12</sup>

So, it is to this 'man of the church' that I now want to turn; and the first thing to notice is that he is not 'anti-clerical' in any sense. Jerome even described one of his own correspondents as the kind of priest Moses would have chosen (as instructed in Numbers); the kind he would have *known* deserved the title—that is to say, a man who “meditated day and night on the law of God.”<sup>13</sup> Sometimes, this simple definition is expanded.<sup>14</sup> Sometimes, after expanding the allusion, Jerome will simply revert to the more simple evocation.<sup>15</sup> Sometimes, he will achieve his effect by a negative comparison, and here we see how his blunt suspicion of clerical pretension could expand in certain contexts to reflect his anxiety about potential deceit. The *mala conuersatio* of erring *ecclesiastici* exposes the fragility of a bishop's *nomen*, which can rest too much on *dignitas* (again) and fail in an awareness that the more people trust them, the greater their obligation.<sup>16</sup> Jerome particularly held against the followers of Pelagius their intermingling of free will and *legis scientia*, which (as he put it) allowed them to promise themselves whatever they wished for. The reining in of undisciplined choice was for him a major outcome of deep scriptural knowledge.<sup>17</sup> And of course, he saw himself as following in a line of such men: he assures Eustochium in *Commentariorum in Esaiam* that he is not going to burden her with an exhaustive treatment but only mention “quid ecclesiastici uiri ante nos senserint.”<sup>18</sup>

12 Lisa Bailey, *Christianity's Quiet Success: The Eusebius Gallicanus Sermon Collection and the Power of the Church in Late Antique Gaul* (South Bend, Ind.: University of Notre Dame Press, 2010).

13 Jerome, *Ep.* 140.1 (CSEL 56/1.269): “in lege dei die ac nocte meditatur.” Jerome was content to take *presbyterus* here as meaning ‘priest’ (Cyprian, the recipient of the letter, being a presbyter) in a sense that Num 11:16 would not. The allusion (to virtually the opening of Ps 1) recurs in passage after passage.

14 In Jerome, *Comm. in Eccl.* 6.7–8 (CCL 72.299), for example, which stresses learning marked nevertheless by a longing to know more, the *ecclesiasticus uir* walks the difficult path that leads to life. I have used this form (7–8) in all references to the major commentaries, since the modern editions are not consistent, even within a single volume.

15 For example, Jerome, *Comm. in Hier.* 1.78 (CCL 74.45).

16 *Ibid.*, 3.11 (CCL 74.125).

17 *Ibid.*, 4.60 (CCL 74.227).

18 Jerome, *Comm. in Es.* 6.prol. (CCL 73.223).



This elasticity of reference, when describing the ideal churchman, is important, because there are many places where Jerome openly admits the existence of broken reeds. Even an innocent capacity for error could extend to a misunderstanding of something as fundamental as baptism (“non plena fide accipiunt baptismum salutare”);<sup>19</sup> and he was sure that when the end approached—when iniquity abounded, when the charity of many had grown cold, when signs and portents would deceive even the elect—the same malaise would be evident and at least some *ecclesiastici uiri*, less secure in their faith, would quickly fall away.<sup>20</sup> To a certain degree, this was a matter of expertise. Some “who laid claim to the title *magister*” (this was in the context of the Pelagian error) could undermine free choice and open the door to the Manichees;<sup>21</sup> others might simply miss the point of a passage, outstripped by the *eruditi Hebraeorum*.<sup>22</sup> Jerome even coined the phrase *uiri magis ecclesiastici*.<sup>23</sup> What worried him most, however, was the fluidity of the situation. Rarely was one faced with two clear-cut opposing camps: slippage and ambiguity were the real dangers, so that Jerusalem (standing, in Jeremiah, for the church) was, as he put it, *in transmigrationem*, thanks to the deficiency of *ecclesiastici uiri et doctores*; and thus “the voice of heresy came to prevail within her.”<sup>24</sup> Part of the problem, further, was the gullibility or exploited simplicity of the ‘people’. The ‘men of the church’ fail to safeguard the truth of her teaching, and the people are persuaded that the truth now lies with their inventions. A vicious circle is then formed: the admiration of the people persuade the false *magistri* that they do indeed deserve that title.<sup>25</sup>

---

19 Jerome, *Comm. in Hiez.* 4.16.4–5 (CCL 75.164): “non solum de haereticis, sed de ecclesiasticis intelligi potest.” 7.23 (CCL 75.303–20) of the same work has a long discussion of the slippery slope involved.

20 Jerome, *Comm. in Eccl.* 9.12 (CCL 72.330).

21 Jerome, *Dial. adu. Pelag.* 3.5 (CCL 80.104).

22 Jerome, *Comm. in Es.* 4.11.1–3 (CCL 73.147). In *Ep.* 78.11 (CSEL 55.60), a letter to Fabiola, written in 400, Jerome expresses amazement at how many *ecclesiastici uiri* stick with readings entirely absent from the Hebrew, trying to make sense of ill-judged confusions.

23 Jerome, *Dial. adu. Pelag.* 1.24 (CCL 80.31).

24 Jerome, *Comm. in Hier.* 2.76 (CCL 74.96): “hereticus in ea sermo praeualeat.”

25 Jerome, *Comm. in Hiez.* 11.34 (CCL 75.487–88). See further idem, *Comm. in Hier.* 1.55. Jerome was suspicious of the wish to gain applause, especially since it was so often associated with the misleading of less experienced listeners. But one detects at times a particular barb, directed at ponderous complexity rather than self-satisfied conceit. The church’s simple eloquence more often than not bears sufficiently the mark of truth, he would declare; and his interpretation (in this instance, of Ps 89) will not call for another interpreter in turn—unlike the explanations of the over-learned, which are harder to

Ambiguity has its connection with two other features of the ecclesial scene (and here we are coming very close to the heart of Jerome's need for a *typical* set of circumstances and a *typical* leader and guide). Let me identify these features briefly and then tackle each in turn. First, reflection on the implications of scripture demanded, for Jerome, a public forum, an arena of secure and honest debate. Therefore, second, one had to be sure that people said what they meant, that they were willing to broadcast their interpretations and contend with the criticisms or modifications of others—indeed, with the possibility of multiple opinions.

The forum was, for Jerome, the ambit of the commentator. He perhaps not unnaturally believed that, when he reached a conclusion debarring those of others, he had followed the *ecclesiasticum sensum*. It was, nevertheless a commentator's duty, his *officium*, to place before his readers the opinions of as many scholars as might prove useful.<sup>26</sup> It was precisely in commentaries, "ubi libertas est disserendi," that Jerome argued for elasticity—or at least for the acknowledgement and examination of ambiguity, of variation. What possible harm could it do the church's faith if, for example, readers were shown how Hebrew writers explained a single phrase in several ways?<sup>27</sup> His point, presumably, was that Christians should enjoy the same fearless freedom (when the text made it appropriately available). Jerome the scholar saw himself as an interpreter in the classical sense: someone who mediated between text and reader and was not content merely to translate. This *explanatory* vocation was crucial; yet, one can immediately see a difficulty looming. *Interpretatio* in a church context need not lack style, but one had to play the style down, lest one seem concerned only for a secluded handful of intellectual friends; forgetful that the church was supposed to address "the whole human race."<sup>28</sup> All very well; but, in the earlier sections of this same letter to Pammachius, Jerome laid bare a deep regret, brought to a head by the quarrel with Jovinian. As soon as

---

understand than the texts they are designed to explain, *Ep.* 140.1. One had to acknowledge the *antiquitas* of an opinion rather than its associated *auctoritas*: that was the way all *ecclesiastici uiri* had judged the matter for centuries, *Dial. adu. Pelag.* 3.2 (CCL 80.100). The most satisfying solution was to find an interpretation that was (like the authenticity of 1 John) accepted "ab uniuersis ecclesiasticis et eruditis uiris." See Jerome, *De uir. illus.* 9 (TU 14.13).

26 Jerome, *Apol. adu. Ruf.* 1.22 (CCL 79.60).

27 *Ibid.*, 1.19 (CCL 79.56).

28 Jerome, *Ep.* 48.4 (CSEL 54.350). Jerome, *Apol. adu. Ruf.* 1.30 (CCL 79.29–31), taunts Rufinus for taking pride in his learning and eloquence and supposes that it matters little to him if someone fails to understand what he wishes to say, "since you speak not to everyone, but only to your own crowd."

he wrote anything, he complained, a bevy of copyists passed it around every Tom, Dick, and Harry (“in uulgus . . . disseminant”): some out of affection and regard, for both his style and his learning; others quite the contrary, to make scorn of his ideas. Now, in distant exile, he had to beg Pammachius to preside over a local comparison of texts. He was caught out in the open: not ensconced in some quiet library, not formally preaching from some pulpit, but dragged into the street to argue his point (or have it argued for him) among people whose agenda were very different from his own.

Jerome’s wrestling with Rufinus in his long *Apologia* is where we find his clearest definition of authentic debate. Near the end of the third book, for example, he takes Rufinus to task over Origen’s opinions on the soul.<sup>29</sup> We find “apud ecclesiasticos tractatores,” Rufinus has asserted, three views of *animae*; but he is not sure which one is true. Jerome jumps on this as a pathetic basis for advance. Right, he says; does the truth lie elsewhere altogether, or is one of the three (not Origen’s view, obviously) possibly right? Rufinus needs to tell us. “Why,” asks Jerome, “do you hedge within narrow limits the freedom of those discussing the matter?”<sup>30</sup> Instead of hinting, therefore, that one opinion might be wrong, the true *tractator* should say which one he thinks is *right* (and in all fairness this is what Jerome normally does). Rufinus has allowed his declared uncertainty (at a moment when it suits him) to let the false stand along with the true, making no declared choice. He is allowed a final wriggle on the hook (and here Jerome comes to the heart of the squabble): he agrees that, whatever may be true of souls themselves, “God is the creator of both souls and bodies.” Ha! says Jerome: so, you skirt the issue of whether souls (possibly pre-existent) are ‘imprisoned’ in bodies, and whether the devil has a hand in this. “You keep mum about what worries everyone, and just answer the questions that nobody has asked.”<sup>31</sup>

I have spent some time on this passage (and there are others like it) only because it illustrates well two principles sacred to Jerome: first, there was a *libertas disputantium* that should not be restricted (and there had to be a place and a time for such a *disputatio*); and second, the *tractator* who was genuinely seeking the mind of the church had to lay out all the opinions expressed before him, and then argue for the one he felt most acceptable. But it also remained the case that not everyone witnessing the *disputatio* was equal to its subtleties;

29 Jerome, *Apol. adu Ruf.* 3.30 (CCL 79.101–102).

30 Ibid.: “cur disputantium libertatem angusto fine concludis.”

31 Ibid. (CCL 79.102): “Deus sit et animarum creator et corporum . . . Haec taces quae omnes flagitant, et ad illa respondes quae nullus inquirat.”

and it is probable that Rufinus had taken refuge behind this danger (which we have already observed in the exchange with Pammachius above).

Jerome would assert, naturally, that he was more careful. He recalled, against Rufinus, his own handling of Job: respectful of the *interpretatio antiqua*, he had measured the puzzles, omissions, and botches of his Latin text not only against the Hebrew but also against longstanding principles of grammar, rhetoric, and philosophy. Rufinus, on the other hand, did not seem to mind that *some* Greeks (Jews and heretics mainly) had, on the basis of the Septuagint, happily fudged *multa mysteria Saluatoris*. Yes, the offending texts were all objectively arrayed in the *Hexapla*; but they were governed in their orthodox usage by the *explanationes* of *ecclesiastici uiri*. Jerome's claim was actually more straightforward even than that, and imposed a special restriction on the *disputatio* of churchmen. "Have I not a greater right," he cried, "I, a Christian, born of Christian parents, wearing the badge of the cross on my forehead . . . to correct what has been corrupted and to lay open the mysteries of the church in unsullied and loyal terms, and not be faced with the disapproval of over-precious if not positively spiteful readers?"<sup>32</sup>

So, we see a variety of points made that already create a complex picture of what 'church' might mean in these connections. Jerome was not proposing an alternative to the church, odd priest though he may have been; and he made immersion in scripture the ideal hallmark of its leading members. But he recognised dangerous weaknesses in at least some who laid claim to leadership, and the first of these was reflected in the conduct of debate. One needed to rehearse a range of opinions; one needed to be cautious about levels of understanding in the church's audience; one needed to be clear in one's own opinions, even if they proved to be wrong; but one needed above all to recognise the force of antiquity and consistent loyalty to tradition.

We identified, however, another (and not unconnected) preoccupation: honesty. One had to be sure that people said what they meant. One of Rufinus' common pleas was that Origen's writings had been corrupted by heretics; that his hero had always understood correctly the *ecclesiastici uiri*.<sup>33</sup> That encouraged him to argue in turn that he was allowed (in his translations) to 'correct'

---

32 Ibid., 2.29 (CCL 79.68): "christianus de parentibus christianis et uexillum crucis in mea fronte portans, cuius studium fuit omnia repetere, deprauata corrigere et sacramenta ecclesiae puro et fidei aperire sermone, uel a fastidiosis uel a malignis lectoribus non debeo reprobati!" This was, not least in its ironic echo of Rufinus' own excuses, a remarkably partisan judgement, and to have repeated it here says something about Jerome's Latin exile in his Greek *milieu*.

33 Ibid., 2.17 (CCL 79.144).

Origen's words—the crucial difference being (compare Jerome's position as I have just summarised it) that he did not tell anyone he was doing so. Jerome was not fooled. The church, he told Pammachius and Marcella (early in 402) was now faced with a “serpent brood.” The ‘Origenists’ should either accept what the orthodox taught or put up some defence of their own position, so we would know whom to befriend and whom to shun. Clean fighters in real wars would often, amidst the carnage, suddenly clasp hands, swift peace transforming the rage of battle. Only these heretics refuse such alliance: in their minds they continue to reject what they have been forced to say aloud. If the people tumble to their blasphemies, they blandly say that this was the first they knew of such teaching among their masters, and if their writings are adduced against them, they deny aloud what the texts themselves make evident.<sup>34</sup> They are as eager to deceive as the *ecclesiastici* are to pursue honest study—indeed, more so: they are proud and at the same time adrift (“peregrina . . . quia aliena a Deo”). Worst of all, they mock the church by occupying the territory that is proper to herself: “imitantur habitationem ecclesiae.”<sup>35</sup> Here Jerome emphasises how much, to an external eye, orthodox and heretical communities could look alike to the deceived or the uninitiated.

This was a lasting frustration, the product of an abiding principle. In his famous *Epistula* 133 to Ctesiphon, written in 415 at a new juncture in the controversy surrounding Pelagius, Jerome assured his correspondent that the heretics in question had not actually said anything new, “[although they] deceive the simple and the uninstructed . . . the men of the church,” on the other hand, Jerome continued, “who meditate night and day on the law of God, them they cannot deceive.”<sup>36</sup> It was a tough battle, though. Jerome challenges Pelagius to “Listen to what the church puts so plainly. You think it reflects only the naïveté of peasants,” he sneers, but, “say what you believe,” he urges; “proclaim in public what you say privately to your pupils.”<sup>37</sup> That was the ideal situation. Only a while before, he had declared that “nothing pleases us but what concerns

---

34 Jerome, *Ep.* 97.2 (CSEL 55.183).

35 Jerome, *Comm. in Es.* 7.18.1–3 (CCL 73.275).

36 Jerome, *Ep.* 133.3 (CSEL 56/1.244): “simplices quidem indoctosque decipiunt, sed ecclesiasticos uiros, qui in lege dei die ac nocte meditantur, decipere non ualent.” For what immediately follows see 133.11 (CSEL 56/1.257).

37 *Ibid.*, 133.11 (CSEL 56/1.257): “Audi ecclesiasticam simplicitatem siue rusticitatem aut inperitiam, ut nobis uidetur. Loquere, quod credis; publice praedica, quod secreto discipulis loqueris.”

the church, and what we can talk about in church publicly without fear."<sup>38</sup> To Ctesiphon, therefore, he was simply making a lengthier plea:

why don't you spell out what you feel without inhibition (since you're so keen on your freedom)? [Here, he is addressing Pelagius, of course.] About the secrets of your little enclaves people hear one thing, but from the public platform quite another [*cubicula* and *rostra* are well contrasted]. I suppose the untutored masses can't bear the weight of your *arcana* or take solid food: they have to rest content with children's milk. I hadn't yet written a word and you were already threatening me with thunderous replies, hoping to scare me so that I wouldn't dare open my mouth. It didn't strike you that I would write, that *I* would force *you* to reply, so that for once you would say openly what now and again, here and there, in the presence of this person or that, you might speak of but might also keep silent. I don't want your 'freedom' to allow you to deny what you have put in writing. This will be the church's victory, when you say openly what you mean in your heart.<sup>39</sup>

If they agreed, Jerome suggests, they could be friends; if they were at odds, then all the churches would at least know what Pelagius meant—indeed, "For you to have exposed your meaning will have been to suffer defeat." It had been easy to deal with Arians and the like: they made their opinions clear. "This is the only heresy," he complained—and we hear again his lament to Pammachius and Marcella—"that's embarrassed to say publicly what it doesn't fear to teach in secret."<sup>40</sup>

It is hardly surprising that Jerome should have made this point so persistently in the context of church leadership, for the primary duty of his *ecclesiasticus uir* was to battle 'heresy'. He happily used the word in an Old Testament

38 Ibid., 120.10 (CSEL 55.500): "Nobis autem nihil placet, nisi quod ecclesiasticum est et publice in ecclesia dicere non timemus."

39 Ibid., 133.11 (CSEL 56/1.257): "quare non libere, quod sentis, loqueris? Aliud audiunt cubiculorum tuorum secreta, aliud nostrorum populi. Etenim uulgius indoctum non potest arcanorum tuorum onera sustenare nec capere solidum cibum, quod infantiae lacte contentum est. Necdum scripsi et comminaris mihi rescriptorum tuorum fulmina, ut scilicet hoc timore perterritus non audeam ora reserare, et non animaduertitis idcirco nos scribere, ut uos respondere cogamini et aperte aliquando dicere, quod pro tempore, personis et locis uel loquimini uel tacetis. Nolo uobis liberum esse negare, quod semel scripseritis. Ecclesiae uictoria est uos aperte dicere, quod sentitis."

40 Ibid., 133.11 (CSEL 56/1.258): "Sententias uestras prodidisse superasse est. . . . Sola haec heresis est, quae publice erubescit loqui, quod secreto docere non metuit."

context, for he made as much as he could of the dramatic circumstances he faced in his texts, presenting the combatants of ancient error as not only vigorous in their own day but also worthy models for a later time. When he says that they stand up against thousands, that they possess at times the power of life and death, that they capture strongholds (often in the interests of repentance), that they reduce the erroneous to silence through a violent, even gory victory, he has the battles of his own day very much in mind.<sup>41</sup> The pathways of his arguments were never simple: he had the enviable capacity to think of several things at once, and this allusive power, linking issue with issue, across centuries as well as between text and text, was perhaps his most accomplished characteristic.<sup>42</sup> And the outcome of victory is almost always and explicitly the result of a proper understanding of *scientia scripturarum*.<sup>43</sup>

What we have to dwell on here is the way in which this militant churchman becomes, in the commentaries, a more elevated being altogether, thus preparing us for our third and final typification. When those who set themselves up against the *scientia dei* are duly humbled (mountains and hills laid low), “Israel finds joy in her Lord,” but, he adds (moving at once to a New Testament setting), “the preaching of the gospel [for that is what he now calls it: *praedicatione evangelica*]” is proclaimed from a platform carved from new wood, and the *ecclesiasticus uir*, no longer working as of old with the letter, speaks with the freshness of the spirit and wears down the hardest of unbelievers’ hearts—“conterat incredulorum corda durissima.” The quality of the preacher’s dominance is thus wholly changed, although the vocabulary of pride and disbelief is allowed to slip across the threshold of the new dispensation.<sup>44</sup> The *ecclesi-*

---

41 For these dramatic images see Jerome, *Comm. in Es.* 9.30.12–17 (CCL 73.388–90); idem, *Comm. in Hiez.* 2.6.6–8 (CCL 75.65–68) (along with *Comm. in Hier.* 1.57 [CCL 74.34–35]) and 9.29.3–7 (CCL 75.403–409). See similar points made in my “Jerome on Jeremiah: Exegesis and Recovery,” in *Jerome of Stridon: His Life, Writings and Legacy*, ed. Andrew Cain and Josef Lössl (Farnham: Ashgate, 2009), 73–83. This is a big story and reaches beyond the scope of a single paper; but it makes a special point about the way in which truth and falsehood sit within the unfolding historical narrative of God’s eternal plan for the church.

42 Such sudden swerves are easier, perhaps, among friends, and speak volumes for the matching skill of his readers (Eustochium especially), so many of his commentaries being exercises in *amicitia*.

43 Jerome, *Comm. in Hiez.* 2.6.13 (CCL 75.69).

44 Jerome, *Comm. in Es.* 12.41.8–16 (CCL 73A.473). Note the striking identification of the *terra Israel* and the *terra ecclesiae*, set within a long context, in *Comm. in Hiez.* 11.39.1 (CCL 75.541). What distinguishes ‘bad’ prophets from good, for Jerome, *Comm. in Hiez.* 4.13.3 (CCL 75.137), was that “nequaquam diuino instinctu, sed proprio corde uaticinantur:



*asticus uir* (even in his Hebrew guise) begins to exercise a pastoral role that is visibly Christian. Jerome pictures men dragged away from the Lord in the chains of 'heretics'; led like cattle to slaughter; prisoners of a lie. These the *uir ecclesiasticus* loosens from their confinement—ensuring in particular that the *simplices* are no longer thus trapped—and “breaks for the hungry the bread of the church’s teaching.”<sup>45</sup> We should make no mistake about Jerome’s perception here. Any feeder of a flock immediately calls to mind the instinct of the church, as when the apostles turned from the Jews to the gentiles, setting an agenda for “every ecclesiastical rank;”<sup>46</sup> and the softening of the heart, the inducement of repentance, the breaking of the bread all betoken a sacramental (Christian) focus.<sup>47</sup>

This carries us well beyond a learned commentary: a deeper sensitivity is evident here. In this third level of Jerome’s *persona*, his engagement with the texts has become not only integrated by allusion and cross-reference but also privy to the organic purposes of the mind behind them. Hitherto, he has been concerned with status in some sense and authority, and with the tenor of the public and private discourse peculiar to itself. Now we have a loosening of the interpretative instinct that is almost poetic in character. Education and sheer hard work had a lot to do with that, no doubt; but I do not mean that he naturally remembered his Virgil, that he would quote lines like “interea magnum sol circumuoluitur annum” (*Aeneid* 3.284) and “atque in se sua per vestigia

---

unde et nihil uident. Qui autem sapiens est, non cordis sui cogitationes, sed Dei spiritum sequitur.” In 11.33.23–33 (CCL 75.479), *propheta* and *uir ecclesiasticus* are totally identified. Jerome notes elsewhere that prophets of the old order, when they are said to ‘console’ their contemporaries (like the ‘apostles’ and ‘men of the church’), refer not to Israel or Jacob or Judah but to “people . . . showing with true insight [*perspicue*] that the mass of *gentes* will be transformed into a people of God.” See Jerome, *Comm. in Es.* 11.40.1–2 (CCL 73.455).

45 Jerome, *Comm. in Es.*, 16.58.6–7 (CCL 73A.667): “frangat doctrinae ecclesiasticae esurientibus panem suum.”

46 Jerome, *Comm. in Hier.* 2.21.6 (CCL 74.70): “omnis ordo ecclesiasticus.”

47 For a succinct summary see Jerome, *Comm. in Es.* 7.22.6–9 (CCL 73.302). Jerome, *Comm. in Hiez.* 11.39.17–19 (CCL 75.544), rounds off a more lengthy treatment, explaining how the restoration of Israel (and the transition from the Jewish to the Christian dispensation) consists in the shaking off of heretical delusion; in the midst of which “sanctos uiros et scripturis diuinis eruditos” “prepare the table of the Lord.” *Pontifex* in its old sense and the *uir ecclesiasticus* in his New Testament guise become increasingly conflated, 12.41.1–2 (CCL 75.589–90). Eventually, we move close to the eucharist itself, as the mystery most compromised by error: the church’s *propositio* has to be as singular as its *panis* (12.44.6–8 [CCL 75.651]).



volvitur annus" (*Georgics* 2.402).<sup>48</sup> When he wrote to Pope Damasus sometime before that "in matters that concern the Church, it's not words we're looking for but understanding," he gave his famous distinction (which he would use again) a deceptive brevity, because *sensus* refers not only to 'meaning' but also to an understanding deep-rooted, charged with feeling, and a source of vital nourishment.<sup>49</sup>

Exemplary passages of this process are immensely rich. Jerome takes phrases in Isaiah as an instruction to "men of apostolic temper and the *magistri* of the churches" to raise on a high cloud-wrapped mountain the standard of the cross against the forces of Babylon. Indeed, they enter with Moses that same cloud, where the great man saw "the hidden *sacramenta* of the church," hearing God calling him ever deeper, just as we too (ordinary readers) must climb to "the peaks of church teaching." The Christian's meditative understanding of the text, therefore, whatever his rank, brings him at once to an intimate relationship with the heart of his faith and indeed his God.<sup>50</sup>

Take, for example, the complex passage in Isaiah, focussing on the peace and unity that accompanies Israel's restoration from exile. Those who help to effect this—*ecclesiastici uiri*, of course—are therefore essentially the resolvers of opposing elements. They are gifted with both speech and wisdom, defeating *sua disputatione* all opinions contrary to the truth. "Aperiat atque confringat," Jerome promises, "quod prius uidebatur dialectica arte conclusum;" and they bring into the open the *arcana haereticorum*, persuading their opponents to acknowledge the *Christi secreta* (*arcana* and *secreta* nicely juxtaposed). The scenario is as we have seen it unfold in our second section, but the ambience is wholly different. This is, as Jerome insists, the same *ecclesiasticus uir*. "God calls this man," he says,

after his own name, for he is the protector of his son Jacob, of Israel elect. God takes him up and makes him speak with his own voice—for the man must be careful not to think that it is he himself who speaks; must refer all to the glory of the giver . . . Thus made expert in the weapons of an apostle, he teaches all men that there is one God only, the God of Jacob and Israel.<sup>51</sup>

48 Idem, *Comm. in Eccl.* 1:6 (CCL 72.255).

49 Idem, *Ep.* 21.42 (CSEL 54.142): "maxime cum in ecclesiasticis rebus non quaerantur uerba, sed sensus."

50 Jerome, *Comm. in Es.* 6.13.2 (CCL 73.224): "et apostolicis uiris ac magistris ecclesiarum . . . abscondita ecclesiae sacramenta . . . ad excelsa ecclesiasticorum dogmatum."

51 Ibid. 12.45.1–7 (CCL 73A.505–506): "Istiusmodi uirum uocat Deus ex nomine suo, quia defensor est pueri eius Iacob, et electi illius Israel. Hunc suscipit, et assimilat sermoni

In his work on Ezekiel, Jerome says that too many had lost the ability to stand where Moses stood, resisting those who, with the pretence of being *ecclesiis praepositi*, misled the *simplices*. They lacked the saving fear of Paul (in 2 Cor 11:3), "I am afraid that, just as the snake with his cunning seduced Eve, your minds may be led astray from single-minded devotion to Christ." These privileges are very intimate—standing with Moses, being released from fear.<sup>52</sup> We are even carried into the heart of the churchman. The church's enemies have many weapons with which to fight her, but *eruditi homines* consume them in the fire of the Holy Spirit—"that is to say, with the church's voice: that voice possessed by him who can say, 'Did not our hearts burn within us as he talked to us on the road and explained the scriptures to us?'"<sup>53</sup>

Note that the destined duties and victories of the men of the church do not just roll over from the Jewish past to the Christian present: they reach forward to the end of time, taking on almost the status of angels and hunting down the last stragglers from the truth in distant caves and ridges.<sup>54</sup> Then the *ecclesiastici uiri* will spell out the true meaning of a new covenant in the hearts of mankind—and this is not an insight limited to Ezekiel: Jeremiah can also say, "Within them I shall plant my Law, writing it on their hearts" (31:33). In some of the earlier books of the commentary, this moulding of a heart of flesh had been a tough task, involving a great deal of hammering; but that was thanks to the fell influence of the 'heretics', and the heart of flesh is eventually "molle . . . et, quod possit Dei suscipere et sentire praecepta"—not just conformity but insight, full understanding, and the sound of the hammer stilled.<sup>55</sup> The outcome is spectacular, a sudden release from long and wearying obligations: "There will be no further need for everyone to teach neighbour or brother, saying, 'Learn to know Yahweh!' No, they will all know me" (31:34).<sup>56</sup>

Once we reach this higher elevation, we begin almost to part company with text and enter some other arena of endeavour, where varied style and literary tradition have been superseded as mere instruments of transmission. Jerome

---

suo, qui cauere debet ne suum putet esse quod loquitur, sed omnia ad datoris referat gloriam . . . Cum enim instructus armatura apostoli, omnes docuerit non esse alium Deum nisi unum, qui sit Iacob et Israel Deus."

52 Jerome, *Comm. in Hiezechielem* 10.32.17 (CCL 75.462): "Timeo autem ne sicut serpens decipit Euam in malitia sua, corrumpantur sensus uestri per simplicitatem quae est in Christo."

53 Ibid., 11.39.1–5 (CCL 75.539): "sermone uidelicet ecclesiastico, quem qui habuerit poterit dicere: *Nonne cor nostrum erat ardens in uia, cum aperiret nobis Iesus scripturas?*". Note the intense prayer of the beleaguered churchman in 14.47.1–5 (CCL 75.706–12).

54 Jerome, *Comm. in Hier.* 3.65 (CCL 74.159).

55 Ibid., 4.60.4 (CCL 74.227).

56 Ibid., 6.26.6 (CCL 74.319): "nequaquam Iudaicos quaerant magistros et traditiones et mandata hominum, sed doceantur a spiritu sancto."

opens the final book of his commentary on Jeremiah (as it now survives) by remembering *Aeneid* 6.27, “Hic labor ille domus et inextricabilis error;” and he continues with memories of 5.588–91:

Vt quondam Creta fertur Labyrinthus in alta  
 parietibus textum caecis iter ancipitemque  
 mille uis habuisse dolum, qua signa sequendi  
 frangeret indeprentus et irremeabilis error.

Obviously, *error* has made the connection in Jerome’s mind: *error* and the sheer confusion of scripture’s pathways have blinded the seeker. Then he adds:

Ita et ego, sanctarum scripturarum ingressus oceanum et mysteriorum  
 Dei ut sic loquar labyrinthum—de quo scriptum est: *Posuit tenebras  
 latibulum suum et: Nubes in circuitu eius*—perfectam quidem scientiam  
 ueritatis mihi uindicare non audeo, sed nosse cupientibus aliqua doctrinae  
 indicia praebuisse: non meis uiribus sed Christi misericordia, qui,  
 errantibus nobis,  
 . . . *ipse dolos tecti ambagesque resoluit,  
 caeca regens Spiritu sancto uestigia.*<sup>57</sup>

So, the deep ocean of God’s mysteries, a veritable labyrinth; Jerome not daring to claim all knowledge, but knowing that he must satisfy the desire of others; and the aid that comes from Christ’s mercy. But in those last words, without telling us, he has gone back to *Aeneid* 6.28–30:

magnum reginae sed enim miseratus amorem  
 Daedalus ipse dolos tecti ambagesque resoluit,  
 caeca regens filo uestigia.

We find the very same phrases: “dolos tecti ambagesque” and “caeca . . . uestigia.” Daedalus behaves exactly as does Jerome, strengthened by Christ’s mercy; it is that mercy, *in its Virgilian mode, with Virgilian force*, not his own capacity, that unscrambles the *inextricabilis error* of the scriptural labyrinth.<sup>58</sup> Virgil’s logic, *on its own terms*, makes Jerome’s point.

57 Jerome, *Comm. in Hiez.* 14 (CCL 75.677).

58 Ibid. Compare Jerome’s appeal to *Aeneid* 1.135, where Neptune is about to vent his spleen, but then breaks the syntax by agreeing to withhold his wrath (as does God). Jerome,

That is why, somewhat earlier in the commentary, Jerome seems to think that he can just take Virgil as all there needs to be said about the sentiment of a verse—the Lord’s unforgetting concern (as expressed in the Latin phrases of Jer 18:4: “Numquid deficiet de petra agri nix Libani? Aut euelli possunt aquae erumpentes, frigidae et defluentes?”). “Virgil says much the same,” he continues, and quotes from *Eclogues* (1.59–63) and *Aeneid* (1.607–609):

Ante leues ergo pascentur in aethere cerui  
et freta destituent nudos in litore pisces,  
quam nostro illius labatur pectore uultus; [*Eclogues*]  
et in alio loco:  
In freta dum fluuii current, dum montibus umbrae  
lustrabunt, conuexa polus dum sidera pascet,  
semper honos nomenque tuum laudesque manebunt [*Aeneid*].<sup>59</sup>

This is not mere reminiscence. Virgil and scripture have identified the same forces in nature and the unforgettable permanence of God’s name. The coincidence is almost taken for granted and effortlessly elided.

### Conclusion

So, following the arc of Jerome’s personifications, his careful delineation of the ‘man of the church,’ we have travelled, and travelled with him, from pointed satire to a deep concern for the work of exegesis, its etiquette, its proper and free space, and for the defence of tradition and coherent dogma, ending with a man totally enfolded within his material to an extent that is at once communicable, sensitive, penetrating, and ultimately as much the fruit of a deep classicism as it is of a Christian faith.

It is true that I have taken only a small step in uncovering this shift from a classical memory to a classical manner of interpretation—an inventive moment in Jerome’s work that I suspect can be found in many other passages. We see him predominantly, and quite rightly, as a student of scripture; but the sheer variety of his skills and interests contributes to a more complex and

---

*Comm. in Hier.* 1.77 (CCL 74.45), singles this out as an example of ἀποσιώπησι: “quos ego—sed motos praestat componere fluctus.”

59 *Ibid.*, 4.4 (CCL 74.178–79).

surprisingly conservative method. More than a formal orator in church, Jerome was eager to make clear the basis of his own excitement in the face of the text. His characteristic engagement has at least three components. It is communicative: it operates within the context of *amicitia*, as that word would have been used in Jerome's *Kreis*, his 'circle' (so, Stefan Rebenich's title is apposite). His commentaries are riddled with specific dedications and allusions to his friends; and his letters are in many instances smaller-scale reflections on passages of scripture, pored over at the invitation of those same correspondents. It is also moralistic: the meaning of the text, as Jerome conceives it, is designed to effect changes in attitude and behaviour. We can even risk calling it 'ascetic', and correspondingly *au fait* of the psychological mechanics of moral progress.<sup>60</sup> Finally, it is intimate: Jerome establishes, for his readers but also for himself, a relationship to the author of the text—to God, to the Spirit, to Jesus, to Moses, to the prophets, to the psalmist, and to Paul. Awareness of this relationship both enlivens perception and focuses determination, for writer and reader alike. The reader eavesdrops, as it were, on a vibrant but almost accidentally available dialogue.

We need to catch Jerome in this pose more frequently than we might believe possible. It is above all the pose of a reader faced with a received text of ancient authority. There is no reason why we should imagine that *as a pose* this would have been, for a man of Jerome's upbringing and class, any different from the educated person's 'reading' of *any* ancient text. While there has always been an implied admission here that *something else* might have been (for Christians) *different*, it has never been easy to decide exactly what might have been *the same*. We are well accustomed to identifying the begrudging acceptance and (nevertheless) disappointment that infects, in different ways, Basil's *Pròs tous néous* and Augustine's *De doctrina Christiana*. The question in both cases is what exactly is missing (from the 'old'). Jerome, notably, never felt the need to write a comparable work (unless we can extract from the *De uiris illustribus* a sense of what was new and welcome). He behaved, in this third area, more like a translator; but his attachment to *sensus*, as in his famous *Epistula* 57 to Pammachius, goes beyond the task of translation in a narrow sense: it

---

60 Like Megan Williams and Georgia Frank, Mark Vessey and Derek Krueger (all four in their different ways) have drawn our attention in recent years to this quality of textual production and perusal: I always think with particular admiration of Mark Vessey's, "Jerome's Origin: The Making of a Christian Literary *Persona*," in *Studia Patristica*, vol. 28, ed. Elizabeth A. Livingstone, papers presented at the 11th International Conference on Patristic Studies, Oxford 1991 (Leuven: Peeters, 1993): 135–43; and see Derek Krueger, *Writing and Holiness: The Practice of Authorship in the Early Christian East* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2004).

uncovers the technique of man who wants to harness the force of 'old' language to the expression of a new urgency. It concerns his way of 'transferring' the traditional culture to the uses of the new religion (and the Jewish heritage to the Christian dispensation).

Any traditionally educated man might try to do this philosophically; but we should not allow our narrative of theological 'development' in the fourth century to run only along tracks of interest and emphasis within the philosophical circles of the time. The advent and impact of Constantine demanded a new theological voice enlivened by political, economic and social change as well. And in any case, given the character of the *paidéia*, there was an instinct that clicked in sooner than philosophical reflection, and that was the 'poetic' instinct.<sup>61</sup> Perhaps Jerome should interest us first as a poet.

What certainly seems the case is that we have here all the familiar components of the fourth-century church and a little more: clerics and their rivals; a new visible and splendidly housed ceremonial; concentrations (spatial concentrations) of virtuous endeavour; a slowness in taking advantage of what Constantine had represented, induced in part by anxiety about its worthwhileness; the hesitant and risky effort to reformulate the received significance of the Christian event; the exhaustion and fragmentation exacerbated by heresy, whether perceived or real; the chaotic and not always helpful topography of Christian conversation; and then this enormous focus on Scripture, above all as a basis for prayer, for presence and inwardness—that is, for the development of a convinced and remarkably novel view of a human being's relationship to God; a focus that depends essentially on literacy principles—interpretation, access, transformation, and insight.<sup>62</sup>

Jerome is a good guide to the contours and dimensions of this blend of novelties. Novelties, yes; but he and his contemporaries were not just hurrying towards 'Christendom' or the Middle Ages or Byzantium. Their passions were defined by a certain untidiness, doubt and unfinished character. If this was a late antiquity—or a piece of late antiquity—that we might think of as 'new', then in a sense it had barely begun.

---

61 Sabine MacCormack, *The Shadows of Poetry: Vergil in the Mind of Augustine* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998), was heading in this direction. Catherine Conybeare achieves comparable success, both in her *Paulinus Noster: Self and Symbols in the Letters of Paulinus of Nola*, OPCS (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000) and in *The Irrational Augustine*, OPCS (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006).

62 To that extent it reaches beyond the 'rhetoric of empire', crucial though Averil Cameron's defining insight has proved to be, *Christianity and the Rhetoric of Empire: The Development of Christian Discourse* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1991).

## Bibliography

- Jerome. *Apologia aduersus libros Rufini* (P. Lardet, ed., *S. Hieronymi presbyteri opera. Contra Rufinum*, CCL, vol. 79. Turnhout: Brepols, 1982).
- . *Commentarius in Ecclesiasten* (M. Adriaen, ed., *S. Hieronymi presbyteri opera. Hebraicae questiones in libro Geneseos; Liber interpretationis Hebraicorum nominum; Commentarioli in Psalmos; Commentarius in Ecclesiasten*, CCL, vol. 72. Turnhout: Brepols, 1959).
- . *Commentariorum in Esaiam libri xviii* (M. Adriaen, ed., *S. Hieronymi presbyteri opera. Commentariorum in Esaiam; In Esaia paruula adbreuiatio*, 2 vols, CCL 73–73A. Turnhout: Brepols, 1959–1963).
- . *Commentariorum in Hieremiam* (S. Reiter, ed., *S. Hieronymi presbyteri opera. In Hieremiam libri vi*, CCL, vol. 74. Turnhout: Brepols, 1960).
- . *Commentariorum in Hiezechielem* (F. Glorie, ed., *S. Hieronymi presbyteri opera. Commentariorum in Hiezechielem libri xiv*, CCL, vol. 75. Turnhout: Brepols, 1964).
- . *Dialogus aduersus Pelagianos* (C. Moreschini, ed., *S. Hieronymi presbyteri opera*, part 3: *Opera polemica*, vol. 2: *Dialogus aduersus Pelagianos*, CCL, vol. 80. Turnhout: Brepols, 1990).
- . *Epistulae* (Isidore Hilberg, ed., *Sancti Eusebii Hieronymi Epistulae*, CSEL, vols 54–56, 2nd ed. Vienna: Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1996).
- . *De uiris illustribus* (E.C. Richardson, ed., *Hieronymus: Liber De uiris inlustribus; Gennadius: Liber De uiris inlustribus*, TU, vol. 14/1. Leipzig: Teubner, 1896).
- . *Vita Malchi* (Pierre Leclerc, Edgardo M. Morales, and Adalbert de Vogüé, eds, *Jérôme. Trois Vies de moines [Paul, Malchus, Hilarion]*, SC, vol. 508. Paris: Éditions du Cerf, 2007).
- Bailey, Lisa. *Christianity's Quiet Success: The Eusebius Gallicanus Sermon Collection and the Power of the Church in Late Antique Gaul*. South Bend, Ind.: University of Notre Dame Press, 2010.
- Cameron, Averil. *Christianity and the Rhetoric of Empire: The Development of Christian Discourse*. Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1991.
- Caner, Daniel F. *Wandering, Begging Monks: Spiritual Authority and the Promotion of Monasticism in Late Antiquity*, TCH, vol. 33. Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2002.
- Cavallera, Ferdinand. *Saint Jérôme: Sa vie et son oeuvre*, Spicilegium Sacrum Lovaniense Études et Documents, fasc. 1–2. Louvain: 'Spicilegium Sacrum Lovaniense' Bureaux, 1922.
- Conybeare, Catherine. *Paulinus Noster: Self and Symbols in the Letters of Paulinus of Nola*, OECs. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000.
- . *The Irrational Augustine*, OECs. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006.



- Duval, Yves-Marie, ed. *Jérôme entre l'Occident et l'Orient*. XVI<sup>e</sup> centenaire du départ de saint Jérôme de Rome et de son installation à Bethléem. Actes du colloque de Chantilly, Septembre 1986, CEASA, vol. 122. Paris: Études Augustiniennes, 1988.
- Frank, Georgia. *The Memory of the Eyes: Pilgrims to Living Saints in Christian Late Antiquity*. Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2000.
- Hevelone-Harper, Jennifer L. *Disciples of the Desert: Monks, Laity, and Spiritual Authority in Sixth-Century Gaza*. Baltimore, Mass.: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2005.
- Humphries, Mark. *Communities of the Blessed: Social Environment and Religious Change in Northern Italy, AD 200–400*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999.
- Hunter, David G. *Marriage, Celibacy, and Heresy in Ancient Christianity: The Jovinianist Controversy*, OECs. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007.
- Krueger, Derek. *Writing and Holiness: The Practice of Authorship in the Early Christian East*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2004.
- MacCormack, Sabine. *The Shadows of Poetry: Vergil in the Mind of Augustine*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998.
- Patlagean, Evelyne. "Ancienne hagiographie byzantine et histoire sociale." *Annales* 23 (1968): 106–26. English translation: "Ancient Byzantine Hagiography and Social History," by Jane Hodgkin in *Saints and their Cults: Studies in Religious Sociology, Folklore and History*, ed. Stephen Wilson, 101–21. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983.
- Rebenich, Stefan. *Hieronymus und sein Kreis: prosopographische und sozialgeschichtliche Untersuchungen*, Historia-Einzelschriften, Bd 72. Stuttgart: Steiner, 1992.
- Rousseau, Philip. "Jerome's Search for Self-Identity." In *Prayer and Spirituality in the Early Church*, vol. 1, edited by Pauline Allen, Raymond Canning, and Lawrence Cross, 125–42. Brisbane: Centre for Early Christian Studies, 1998.
- . "Jerome on Jeremiah: Exegesis and Recovery." In *Jerome of Stridon: His Life, Writings and Legacy*, edited by Andrew Cain and Josef Lössl, 73–83. Farnham: Ashgate, 2009.
- . "Homily and Asceticism in the North Italian Episcopate." In *Chromatius of Aquileia and his Age*, edited by Pier Franco Beatrice and Alessio Peršić, 145–61. Turnhout: Brepols, 2011.
- Vessey, Mark. "Jerome's Origin: The Making of a Christian Literary *Persona*." In *Studia Patristica*, vol. 28, edited by Elizabeth A. Livingstone, papers presented at the 11th International Conference on Patristic Studies, Oxford 1991, 135–43. Leuven: Peeters, 1993.
- Watts, Edward J. *City and School in Late Antique Athens and Alexandria*. Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2006.
- Williams, Megan Hale. *The Monk and the Book: Jerome and the Making of Christian Scholarship*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2006.



# The Use of Comparison and Contrast in Shaping the Identity of a Desert Monk

*Jacobus P.K. Kritzinger*

## 1 Introduction

In this chapter Jerome's use of comparison and contrast in *Vita Malchi* is investigated in order to indicate how he employed these strategies in shaping the identity of the chaste desert monk.<sup>1</sup> There are a considerable number of references and allusions to both classical sources and the Bible in Jerome's *Vita Malchi* and the function of these references and allusions will be examined.<sup>2</sup> Apart from the direct references and obvious allusions, there are also subtler comparisons between *Vita Malchi* and the other narratives, which will be pointed out and discussed.

In this short work Jerome presents the story of Malchus, narrated by Malchus himself who left his hometown Nisibis to join a group of monks in the desert of Chalcis. After many years he decided to leave the monastery and return home to claim his inheritance, but was taken into captivity by Saracens. Being forced into marriage with a fellow captive, Malchus and the woman (who also was a Christian, but became separated from her husband when she was taken captive) decided to live in chastity and only pretend that they were living as a married couple. After a long time Malchus got tired of his captivity and planned an escape. His companion decided to go with him. After being saved by a lioness, which killed their pursuers, they finally reached a Roman camp and were subsequently sent to the ruler of Mesopotamia. Malchus then again joined a group of monks and the woman was entrusted to a group of virgins.

---

1 *Vita Malchi* (VM) was written at Bethlehem ca. 390/391 CE. Jerome also wrote two other lives of desert fathers, namely *Vita Pauli* (VP) and *Vita Hilarionis* (VH).

2 Susan Weingarten, *The Saint's Saints: Hagiography and Geography in Jerome*, Ancient Judaism and Early Christianity, vol. 58 (Leiden: Brill, 2005), 165, says that "the story has been written up in the form of a new literary creation" in which Jerome makes use of both biblical and classical models, while also using contemporary local material from Ammianus and the Babylonian Talmud.

They finally settled in Maronia where they spent their last years in chaste companionship.

The work is full of comparisons and contrasts and it is not possible to discuss all of them. Therefore only the most prominent ones will be presented and their significance will then be highlighted.

## 2 Malchus and His Female Companion in Comparison with Zachariah and Elizabeth

In paragraph 2, when the reader is introduced to the main characters of the narrative, namely the aged Malchus and the old woman who is staying with him, the couple is compared with Zachariah and his wife Elizabeth (Luke 1:5–7) because of their religious zeal and the fact that they regularly visited the church.

There was at the place at that time an old man by the name Malchus, which in Latin we might render '*rex* (king)', a Syrian by nationality and tongue, in fact a genuine son of the soil. His companion was an old woman, very decrepit, who seemed to be on the verge of death. Both of them were so zealously pious and such constant frequenters of the church that they might have been taken for Zacharias and Elizabeth in the Gospel, but for the fact that John was not with them.<sup>3</sup>

One important difference between the two pairs, however, is the fact that Malchus and 'his wife' do not have children, while Zachariah and Elizabeth were the parents of John the Baptist. This difference is significant because Malchus and the woman, whom he was forced to marry, lived together in chastity and did not wish to have children. In the case of Zachariah and Elizabeth (as is also the case with Abraham and Sarah) there is a miraculous childbirth at a very advanced age. Malchus and his wife, however, preferred the ideal of

---

3 Jerome, *VM* 2.2 (SC 508.186–88): "Erat illic senex quidam nomine Malchus, quem nos Latine 'regem' possumus dicere, Syrus natione et lingua, ut reuera eiusdem loci indigena. Anus quoque in eius contubernio ualde decrepita, et iam morti proxima uisebatur: tam studiose ambo religionis, et sic ecclesiae limen terentes, ut Zachariam et Elisabeth de Euangelio crederes, nisi quod Ioannes in medio non erat." All the translations from *VM* are from Stefan Rebenich, *Jerome, The Early Church Fathers* (London: Routledge, 2002), 86–92. Note the similar description of Abraham and Sarah in Gen 18:11: "Abraham and Sarah were already very old, and Sarah was past the age of childbearing." The NIV is used for all the Bible translations.

chastity to marriage and the blessing of offspring. It is important to note the correspondence between the situation of Malchus and his wife and that of Zachariah and Elizabeth, but the difference is almost more important, because it highlights the ideal of chastity. The fact that John the Baptist (who lived in the desert and who can be regarded as an early ascetic) is mentioned, also promotes in an indirect way the ascetic lifestyle and fits in well with Malchus' ascetic inclinations.<sup>4</sup>

### 3 Malchus Leaving the Monastery in Comparison with Half-hearted Followers of Jesus and with Adam and Eve Leaving Paradise

In paragraph 3, Malchus' wish to become a monk is expressed. Where the normal expectation was that a young man of his age would leave his father and mother to be united with his wife and that they would become one flesh,<sup>5</sup> Malchus chose the direct opposite. He left his parents to join a monastery in the desert of Chalcis and stayed there for many years earning his living through manual labour. But then he decided to leave the monastery and return to his home to claim his inheritance after his father's death.

After many years the desire came over me to return to my native country while my mother was still alive (for my father, as I had already heard, was dead), to comfort her widowhood and then to sell the little property and give part to the poor, settle part on the monastery and (why should I blush to confess my faithlessness) keep some to spend in comforts for myself. My abbot began to cry out that it was a temptation of the devil, and that under a fair pretext the snares of the old enemy lay hidden. In other words, the dog was returning to his vomit. Many monks, he said, had been deceived by such suggestions, for the devil never showed himself openly. He set before me many examples from the Scriptures, and told me that even Adam and Eve in the beginning had been overthrown by him through the hope of becoming gods. When he failed to convince me he fell upon his knees and besought me not to desert him, not to ruin myself, not to look back after setting my hand to the plough.<sup>6</sup>

4 In the prologue of *vh*, Paul, the subject of *vp*, is compared with John the Baptist.

5 See Gen 2:24; Mark 10:7; and Eph 5:31.

6 Jerome, *vm* 3.5–6 (SC 508.190–92): “Post multos annos incidit mihi cogitatio, ut ad patriam pergerem, et dum adiuveret mater—iam enim patrem mortuum audieram—solarer uiduitatem eius, et exinde uenundata possessiuncula, partem erogarem pauperibus, ex parte

This passage reminds us of the excuse of a follower of Jesus who first wanted to return home to bury his father (Luke 9:59–60 and Matt 8:19–20). Malchus' explanation of his intention to sell his property and donate a part of the proceeds to the poor and a part to establish a monastery, sounds praiseworthy and in line with the early Christians' practice of sharing as described in Acts 4:32. But then Malchus added that he also intended to keep a share for himself and he referred to this intention as *infidelitatem meam*—"my unfaithfulness." Here the reader might recall the episode narrated in the fifth chapter of Acts of Ananias and Sapphira, who were dishonest and pretended to share everything they had with their fellow Christians but kept an amount of money for themselves. In *Vita Hilarionis*,<sup>7</sup> Hilarion, like Malchus, also returned home after the death of his parents, but in his case it is mentioned explicitly that he gave a part of their possessions to his brothers (fellow monks) and a part to the poor, keeping nothing for himself because he feared the punishment of Ananias and Sapphira.<sup>8</sup> Hilarion remembers the words of the Lord from Luke 14.33 that he who does not renounce everything that he has, cannot be his disciple. It is interesting that the same issue is addressed in both *uitae*, but that no direct reference is made to Ananias and Sapphira in *Vita Malchi*. Malchus at least confessed his unfaithfulness and at a later stage of his life thought that all the suffering he went through might have been as a result of his decision to leave the monastery.<sup>9</sup> The abbot of the monastery tried to dissuade Malchus from leaving the monastery and warned him against the temptations of the devil.

---

monasterium constituerem—quid erubesco confiteri infidelitatem meam?—partem in sumptuum meorum solatia reseruarem. Clamare hoc coepit abbas meus, diaboli esse temptationem, et sub honestae rei occasione, antiqui hostis astutias. Hoc esse, *reuertere canem ad uomitum suum*. Sic multos monachorum esse deceptos, numquam diabolum aperta fronte se prodere. Proponebat mihi exempla de Scripturis plurima: inter quae illud, ab initio quod Adam quoque et Euam spe diuinitatis supplantauerit. Et cum persuadere non posset, prouoluitus genibus obsecrabat, ne se desererem, ne me perderem, nec, aratrum tenens, post tergum respicerem."

7 It is normally accepted that *VH* was written shortly after *VM*, but before 392. See Pierre Leclerc and Edgardo M. Morales, eds, *Jérôme. Trois Vies de moines (Paul, Malchus, Hilarion)*, SC, vol. 508 (Paris: Éditions du Cerf, 2007), 20.

8 Jerome, *VH* 2.6 (SC 508.216–18): "et parentibus iam defunctis, partem substantiae fratribus, partem pauperibus largitus est, nihil sibi omnino reseruans et timens illud de *Actibus Apostolorum* Ananiae et Saphirae uel exemplum uel supplicium, maximeque dominicae sententiae memor dicentis: '*Qui non renuntiauerit omnibus quae sunt eius, non potest meus esse discipulus*.'"

9 Jerome, *VM* 6.4 (SC 508.198): "Nisi quod forte propterea haec sustineo, quia rursus patriam desiderauit."

He quoted the saying that “a dog returns to its vomit” and related it to Malchus’ return to his fatherland.<sup>10</sup> This saying is now appropriated to the situation of monks who are deceived by the devil. Malchus says that the abbot gave several examples from the Bible, but then specifically mentions that the devil tricked Adam and Eve with the promise of divinity. The temptations and deception in the monastery thereby are compared with the temptations in paradise. Life in the monastery is thus somehow compared with life in paradise. Again there is a difference between the situation of Malchus and that of the biblical characters mentioned: after Adam and Eve were driven from paradise they lost their chastity, while Malchus and his wife succeeded in preserving it.<sup>11</sup> The abbot earnestly begged Malchus not to go and referred him to the words of Jesus from Luke 9:62: “Jesus replied, ‘No one who puts a hand to the plough and looks back is fit for service in the kingdom of God.’” Verses 60–61 provide a better idea of the context:

60. Jesus said to him, ‘Let the dead bury their own dead, but you go and proclaim the kingdom of God.’ 61. Still another said, ‘I will follow you, Lord; but first let me go back and say goodbye to my family.’

It is clear that Malchus, at least in hindsight, realised that he made a mistake in leaving the monastery and he regarded the fact that he was captured just after he left it, as a deserved punishment but also as an intervention of God to save him from returning to the ‘world’ by yielding to the temptation of the devil. The temptation is partly his wish to claim his inheritance, in other words, his wish for money or earthly goods, but it seems as if his lack of commitment to the monastic ideal is the main concern. It seems as if the ‘monastic ideal’ is here replacing the ‘kingdom of God’ of the Lucan passages. The fact that Malchus was captured after he left the monastery meant that he could not carry out what he had in mind, namely to return home and sell his property.

10 This saying is found in Prov 26:11 and 2 Pet 2:22, but the context of the 2 Pet text seems to be relevant to his situation: “21. It would have been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than to have known it and then to turn their backs on the sacred command that was passed on to them. 22. Of them the proverbs are true: ‘A dog returns to its vomit’ and ‘A sow that is washed returns to her wallowing in the mud.’”

11 Jerome, *Adu. Iou.* 1. 16 (PL 23.246), stated that it should be mentioned that Adam and Eve had been virgins in paradise before their fall and that their marriage only took place after their sin and outside paradise. In *Ep.* 130.10 (CSEL 56.189) he further asserts that Eve was cast out of paradise on account of food. We can thus see how chastity and fasting are promoted by his understanding of the paradise narrative.

In that respect he seems to be more fortunate than the persons with whom he is compared. This passage is the only one in *Vita Malchi* where Malchus is criticised so harshly and where his behaviour is frowned upon rather than commended.

#### 4 Malchus in Comparison with Joseph

In paragraph 4 there is a clear allusion to Joseph and, without mentioning his name, Malchus is compared to him. Weingarten provides a useful discussion of this allusion. She says that “the convoy of ‘about seventy souls’ should remind the reader of the seventy souls who went down to Egypt with the patriarch Jacob, in the story of Joseph in the book of Genesis.”<sup>12</sup> She adds:

The biblical allusion is underlined by Jerome’s turning the Saracens into ‘Ishmaelites’ at the very point when they take Malchus captive, reminding his audience of the camel-riding Ishmaelites who took Joseph captive in the book of Genesis. Joseph . . . is a Christian type of *castitas*, and thus serves to underline Jerome’s interest in the Christian ascetic body.<sup>13</sup>

The comparison with Joseph is a positive one, with many similarities: the capture and abduction to a foreign country; the ‘sexual temptation’ and their ability to refuse it and their ‘escape’ from captivity. Joseph became a very important official as second in command of the Egyptian king, while Malchus whose name means ‘king’ can be regarded in a spiritual way as ‘king or champion of chastity’. But again there is an important difference between Malchus and Joseph: Joseph later married and had children, just like Adam and Eve and Zachariah and Elizabeth. It almost seems as if Malchus is presented as an even better example of chastity than Joseph.

---

12 Weingarten, *The Saint's Saints*, 177. On the seventy see Jerome, *VM* 4.1–2 (SC 508.192): “Erant in comitatu meo uiri, feminae, senes, iuuenes, paruuli, numero circiter septuaginta. Et ecce subito equorum camelorumque sessorum Ismaelitarum irruunt.” See Gen 46:27 and Acts 7:14.

13 See also Weingarten, *The Saint's Saints*, 175: “The biblical Joseph became the Christian type of chastity as he refused the sexual advances of Potiphar’s wife; he was also a type of Jesus, being sold for pieces of silver.”

## 5 Malchus in Comparison with Jacob and Moses

The reference to Jacob and Moses is more direct and the resemblance with Malchus' situation lies in the fact that they work as shepherds in the desert.

Some sheep were given to me to tend, and, in contrast to the evils I could have been subjected to, I found this occupation a comfort, for I seldom saw my masters or fellow slaves. My fate seemed to be like that of Jacob, and reminded me also of Moses; both of whom were once shepherds in the desert.<sup>14</sup>

Jerome does not provide any further details, but from the biblical narratives we know that Jacob and Moses both fled from their homes and worked as 'strangers' for their fathers-in-law and both of them received their wives 'as rewards'. Malchus' owner also wanted to reward him by giving him a wife but he initially refuses the gift. After he is persuaded (under threat of the sword) to take her as wife, they decide to live together in chastity, like brother and sister.<sup>15</sup> So we see that the chastity of Malchus is again emphasised by the contrast with the biblical figures with whom he is compared. Moses was married, had two wives and two sons,<sup>16</sup> while Jacob had two wives, two concubines, twelve sons, and a daughter.<sup>17</sup> When Malchus says that he seemed to have something in common with Jacob and that he thought of Moses, he only mentions the fact that they were all shepherds, but keeps silent about the huge difference between them regarding the issue of chastity. There are, however, other significant differences between Malchus and both Jacob and Moses. After comparing himself to them, Malchus mentions that his master, seeing that his flock increased and finding nothing fraudulent (*nihil fraudulentiae*) in him, wanted to reward him.<sup>18</sup> Its significance lies in the fact that the patriarch was known

14 Jerome, *VM* 5.3–4 (SC 508.194): "Traduntur mihi pascendae oues, et in malorum comparatione hoc fruor solatio, quod dominos meos et conseruos rarius uideo. Videbar mihi habere aliquid sancti Iacob, recordabar Moysi, qui et ipsi in eremo pecorum quondam fuere pastores."

15 The idea behind the forced marriage was apparently to produce offspring. See Noel Lenski, "Captivity and Slavery among the Saracens in Late Antiquity (ca. 250–630 CE)," *AnTard* 19 (2011): 259: "Like livestock, then, slaves were apparently bred and their surplus production of offspring exchanged in the markets of settled territories."

16 See Ex 2:21–22; 18:3–4; and Num 12:1.

17 See Gen 29:23–30; 30:4–9; and 32:22.

18 Jerome, *VM* 6.2 (SC 508.196): "Dominus uidens gregem suum crescere, nihilque in me deprehendens fraudulentiae sciebam—enim Apostolum praecepisse, dominis sic quasi Deo

for (and named after) his fraudulence and the fact that he increased his own wealth to the detriment of that of his father-in-law when he was shepherding his uncle's flocks in the same part of the world where Malchus was now working as a shepherd.<sup>19</sup> Keeping the biblical narratives in mind, the readers would also remember that Jacob fled to that region after he deceived his father and cheated his brother out his birthright, while Moses fled to the desert after he lost his temper and killed an Egyptian.<sup>20</sup> Malchus did not flee, but was captured by Saracen nomads and his only fault was that he left the monastery and that he wanted to return home.<sup>21</sup> I strongly believe that the very brief reference to Jacob and Moses is intended to call the well-known biblical background of these characters to mind, paradoxically emphasising the differences between them and Malchus, rather than the similarities, not by what is said, but by the implied background.

## 6 Malchus in Comparison with John the Baptist

There is no direct allusion to John the Baptist in paragraph 6.2 and it might be difficult to prove that Jerome had John in mind when he wrote this, but the scenario between Malchus and his owner narrated here shows certain correspondences with the confrontation between Herod and John the Baptist, as described in Matt 14:3–4 and Mark 6:17–18.

When I refused and said that I was a Christian and that it was not lawful for me to take a woman to wife so long as her husband was alive (her husband had been captured with us, but carried off by another master), my owner was relentless in his rage, drew his sword and began to menace

---

fideliter seruiendum—, et uolens me remunerare, quo fidum sibi magis faceret, tradidit mihi illam conseruam mecum, aliquando captiuam.”

19 See Gen 30:27–43. Jacob tells Laban that his flock has increased greatly after which he tricks Laban into a contract which he manipulates to his advantage. In the Vulgate version of Gen 27:35 his stealing of the first-born blessing from his brother is described by his father with the adverb *fraudulenter*.

20 See Gen 2:11–15.

21 Malchus' trustworthiness is mentioned again at the end of paragraph 6 in Jerome, *VM* 6.9 (SC 508.200): “Nulla fugae suspicio interdum et mense toto aberam fidus gregis pastor per solitudinem.” Ironically enough, the next paragraph relates the planning of their escape, which indicates that Malchus was in the end not so loyal and trustworthy as his owner thought.



me. If I had not without delay stretched out my hand and taken possession of the woman, he would have shed my blood on the spot.<sup>22</sup>

When Malchus at first refused to take the woman and told his master that as a Christian he was not allowed to marry a woman whose husband was still alive, his master became furious and would have killed him if he had not taken the woman in his arms, thereby indicating his willingness to take her as his wife. The prohibition to take someone else's wife is pronounced in Matt 14:4 and Mark 6:18 where John the Baptist said to Herod that he (Herod) is not allowed to take his brother's wife. Herod had arrested and imprisoned John and later, on request of the daughter of Herodias, he had him beheaded in prison. Although it is difficult to prove, there is certainly a possibility that Jerome had this biblical passage in mind, when he describes Malchus' confrontation with his master. If so, Malchus is here indirectly compared to John the Baptist who was eventually killed by Herod. Although Malchus is also threatened with death by the sword, when he tells his master that he (Malchus) is not allowed to marry the woman, he is lucky enough to escape death. Just as John the Baptist censured Herod's unacceptable marriage to his brother's wife, Malchus' attitude on marriage and chastity stands in direct contrast to his Saracen master's views on sexuality.<sup>23</sup> The tension between Malchus and his owner is thus the direct result of their conflicting attitudes towards sex.

## 7 Malchus and His Companion in the Cave in Comparison with Aeneas and Dido in the Cave

Malchus then leads his new wife into a half-demolished cave and describes the atmosphere with the striking expression "Sorrow was bride's-maid."<sup>24</sup> In this passage Jerome alludes to the cave episode in Virgil's *Aeneid* 4.65–70 where Aeneas and Dido are driven into a cave by a storm and a wedding scene with

22 Jerome, *VM* 6.2 (SC 508.196): "Et cum ego refutarem, diceremque me christianum, nec mihi licere uxorem uiuentis accipere—siquidem captus nobiscum uir eius, ab alio domino fuerat abductus—, herus ille implacabilis in furorem uersus euaginato me coepit petere gladio. Et nisi festinus tenere brachio mulierem praeoccupassem, illico fudisset sanguinem."

23 See Weingarten, *The Saint's Saints*, 189: "Jerome here is using the Saracens, worshippers of Venus, the goddess of sex, and insistent on marriage on pain of death, as an extreme contrast to his chaste hero Malchus."

24 Jerome, *VM* 6.3 (SC 508.196): "Duco in speluncam semirutam nouam coniugem, et **pro-nubante** nobis **tristitia**." (emphasis added).

Juno as bride's-maid is described.<sup>25</sup> Weingarten, who regards this episode as the central passage of the *uita*, discusses this and other allusions to Virgil in detail and indicates how Jerome "creates a series of antitheses opposed one by one to the elements of the Aeneid narrative."<sup>26</sup> She also draws attention to the different outcomes of the cave encounters of the two pairs:

It is a magnificent paradox that whereas consummation of sexual union is followed by parting (and Dido's suicide) for Dido and Aeneas, rejection of sexual union is followed by living together for the rest of their lives for Malchus and his companion. Malchus, of course, will go to Heaven: Aeneas later meets Dido in Hades.<sup>27</sup>

Again, as is the case in the previous comparisons with biblical characters, the contrasts between Malchus (and his wife) and the other characters are more important than the similarities. Without mentioning Aeneas and Dido by name, Jerome indicates that the chaste Christian hero and his unnamed wife have set a far better example than the greatest Roman epic hero and the Carthaginian queen.

## 8 The Monastery in Comparison with the Colony of Ants

A long time of loyal service to their Saracen masters had passed before Malchus one day decides to escape from captivity in order to join a monastery again. He is sitting alone in the wilderness, watching a colony of ants and thinking about the companionship of the monks. This spectacle makes him aware of the fact that he is tired of his captivity and missing the company of the other monks.

In short that day afforded me a delightful entertainment. So, remembering how Solomon sends us to the shrewdness of the ant and quickens our

---

25 Virgil, *Aen.* 4.65–70: "Speluncam Dido dux et Troianus eandem/deveniunt: prima et Tellus et pronuba Iuno/dant signum; fulsere ignes et conscius aether/conubiis, summoque ulularunt vertice nymphae./Ille dies primus leti primusque malorum/causa fuit." (emphasis added). Adalbert De Vogüé, *Histoire littéraire du mouvement monastique dans l'Antiquité*, première partie: *Le monachisme latin de l'itinéraire d'Égérie à l'éloge funèbre de Népotien (384–396)* (Paris: Éditions du Cerf, 1993), 91, notes the allusion to the cave episode of Dido and Aeneas, but Weingarten, *The Saint's Saints*, 173–74, provides a more detailed and very useful discussion of this passage.

26 Weingarten, *The Saint's Saints*, 171.

27 *Ibid.*, 173–74.

sluggish faculties by setting before us such an example, I began to tire of captivity, and to yearn for the cells of the monastery, and longed to imitate those ants and their doings, where toil is for the community, and since nothing belongs to any one, all things belong to all.<sup>28</sup>

While watching the ants, Malchus recalls the words of Solomon about laziness.<sup>29</sup> From his description of the ants it is, however, clear that Malchus is not primarily concerned with laziness here, but rather with the ideal of monasticism: the idea of working together for the common good, sharing all possessions; carrying each other's burdens, et cetera. The last part of this passage echoes the practice of sharing in the first Christian community as described in Acts 4.<sup>30</sup> The comparison drawn between the ants, as Malchus describes them, and the monks is striking, but does not convey the same idea as the Proverbs passage which advises the lazy man to follow the example of the hardworking ants. Perhaps 'Solomon's' words served as a wake-up call for Malchus in his weariness, but at the same time the association of the ants with the monastery reminds him of that ideal community of caring and sharing people. Hagendahl has pointed out similarities between Jerome's description of the ants and the ant scene following the mentioned cave episode in *Aeneid*.<sup>31</sup> It is interesting to note that the ant passage in *Vita Malchi* shows more verbal similarities with the description in *Aeneid* than with the passage in Proverbs. There is an important correspondence between Malchus and Aeneas: both are planning to leave; Malchus is planning his escape from captivity and Aeneas is about to leave Carthage. The difference between them is the fact that Aeneas leaves Dido behind, while Malchus persuades his companion to join him in the flight. Aeneas does not want to leave Carthage, but he cannot ignore his

---

28 Jerome, *VM* 7.3 (SC 508.202): "Pulchrum mihi spectaculum dies illa praebuit, unde recordatus Salomonis, ad formicae solertiam nos mittentis, et pigras mentes sub tali exemplo suscitantis, coepi taedere captiuitatis, et monasterii cellulas quaerere, ac formicarum illarum sollicitudinem desiderare ubi laboratur in medium, et cum nihil cuiusquam proprium sit, omnium omnia sunt."

29 See Prov 6:6–8: "Go to the ant, you sluggard;/ consider its ways and be wise!/ It has no commander,/ no overseer or ruler,/ yet it stores its provisions in summer/and gathers its food at harvest."

30 See Acts 4:32.

31 Harald Hagendahl, *Latin Fathers and the Classics: A Study of the Apologists, Jerome and Other Christian Writers*, Studia Graeca et Latina Gothoburgensia, vol. 6 (Stockholm: Almqvist and Wiksell, 1958), 118, indicated the following similarities: "aspicio formicarum gregem angusto calle feruere . . . Illae uenturae hiemis memores" (*VM* 7.2 [SC 508.200–202]) and "formicae . . . hiemis memores . . . calle angusto . . . feruet." (*Aen.* 4.402–407).

divine calling which serves as justification for his decision. Malchus similarly betrays the trust of his owner who did not suspect him of flight and although it seems to bother him somehow, his calling to return to the monastery is stronger than his loyalty towards his slave owner.

## 9 Malchus and His Companion in the Cave in Comparison with Daniel in the Lion's Den

This second cave episode calls a similar biblical setting to mind, namely that of the prophet Daniel who was thrown into the lions' den as described in chapter 6 of Daniel.<sup>32</sup> There are no direct references to this book in *Vita Malchi*, but the fact that Malchus and the woman are saved from the lion, while their pursuers are killed, relates to the narrative in Daniel, where Daniel is saved but his opponents are killed. In both cases the main characters stay unharmed in the presence of the lions for a long time, while their persecutors are killed immediately. Jerome seems to suggest that Malchus and his companion's situation was even more dangerous than Daniel's since they are threatened by a lioness with a cub.<sup>33</sup> A very important resemblance between the two narratives is the similar explanation offered for their salvation: Malchus and his wife's safety is ascribed to their chastity, while Daniel is saved on account of his righteousness before God.<sup>34</sup> They are therefore saved as a result of their virtues, *iustitia* and *castitas* respectively. If we accept that Jerome indeed had the Daniel narrative in mind when he wrote *Vita Malchi*, the function of the comparison with Daniel would be to emphasise the fact that God protects his children who lead a chaste and righteous life. In this case, although there are slight differences in the two narratives, there is no hint of any important contrast between Malchus (and his companion) and Daniel, who survived a similar ordeal.

32 A detailed discussion of this episode is offered in Jacobus P.K. Kritzingner and Philippus J. Botha, "The Significance of the Second Cave Episode in the *Vita Malchi*," *HTS Theological Studies/Theological Studies* 70(1) (2014): <http://dx.doi.org/10.4102/hts.v70i1.2004>.

33 Jerome, *Comm. in Dan.* 2.7.4 (CCL 75A.839), maintained that lionesses are fiercer (than lions), especially when they are suckling cubs.

34 See Dan 6:23 and also Jerome, *Comm. in Dan.* 2.6.22 (CCL 75A.836): "Non leonum feritas immutata est sed ritus eorum, et rabies conclusa est ab angelo, et idcirco clausa: quia prophetae bona opera praecesserant, ut non tam gratia liberationis sit quam iustitiae retributio."

## 10 Malchus' Life (*historia castitatis*) in Contrast to the Life of the Church (*historia ecclesiae*)

In the prologue Jerome compares *Vita Malchi* with a sham fight in calm waters as preparation for the real battle—the composition of a greater work on the history of the church. The battles which Malchus has fought—against his parents (who wanted to force him into marriage), as a monk (against the promiscuity of the flesh), as a captive against his master (who forced him into marriage and who wanted to kill him after his escape)—all these battles can be compared to the battles of the church. Jerome mentions that the church grew by persecution and was crowned by martyrdom; she has thus overcome these threats, but in the time of the Christian emperors she could not withstand the temptations of power and wealth.<sup>35</sup> Although Malchus and his companion were able to resist the temptations of the devil and survived life-threatening dangers—protected, as it were, by the consciousness of their chastity—the church did not succeed and gave in to the temptations of worldly power and riches. *Vita Malchi* focuses on the virtue of chastity and as a *historia castitatis* it serves as a five-finger exercise for the greater *historia ecclesiae*, but it is more than just an exercise: the conduct of Malchus and his companion also serves as an example and even a rebuke for the church and Christians in general.<sup>36</sup>

## 11 Malchus and His Companion in Comparison with Jerome and Paula

Weingarten mentions the mixing of biographical and autobiographical material in the lives of Paulus, Malchus and Hilarion and maintains that Jerome was also creating the life of Saint Jerome while writing the lives of the saints.<sup>37</sup> De Vogüé also points out the parallels between the lives of Malchus and his

35 Jerome, *VM* 1.3 (SC 508.186): “et postquam ad christianos principes uenerit, potentia quidem et diuitiis maior, sed uirtutibus minor facta sit.”

36 Stefan Rebenich, “Inventing an Ascetic Hero: Jerome’s Life of Paul the First Hermit,” in *Jerome of Stridon: His Life, Writings and Legacy*, ed. Andrew Cain and Josef Lössl (Farnham: Ashgate, 2009), 26, makes the following remark about *VP*, which is also applicable to *VM*: “With the *Vita Pauli* Jerome nevertheless managed to emphasise the ascetic virtues and achievements of his protagonist as exemplary and to encourage readers to *imitatio*.”

37 Weingarten, *The Saint’s Saints*, 192: “In writing the *vitae* of the saints Paul, Hilarion and Malchus he was also creating the *vita* of Saint Jerome. The *Life* of Malchus . . . has many autobiographical elements, both in subject matter and in many of its details, describing as it does Malchus’ life, lived with his ‘wife’ in their cave, on their journey and finally settled, together yet apart.” See also Daniel King, “*Vir Quadrilinguis?* Syriac in Jerome and

companion and that of Jerome and Paula during their early years in Palestine.<sup>38</sup> Mark Vessey has illustrated how Jerome invented a life for himself through the lives he wrote for others<sup>39</sup> and that also applies to his *Vita Malchi*. Just as Malchus and his companion joined separate monastic communities after their escape, Jerome and Paula lived in separate monasteries in Bethlehem<sup>40</sup> until their deaths in 404 and 420 respectively.<sup>41</sup> Malchus and his companion, however, spent their last years together like Zachariah and Elizabeth.<sup>42</sup> The comparison between Malchus and his companion and Jerome and Paula can also be regarded as justification for their close (but chaste) relationship.<sup>43</sup> The primary function of the comparison is certainly to indicate that Jerome and Paula shared Malchus and his companion's attitude towards chastity and that they were also absolutely dedicated to this ideal.

## 12 Conclusion

Malchus and his companion are described as two old people living a life of religious devotion just like Zachariah and Elizabeth did, but childless. Malchus' life as shepherd is compared to the lives of Moses and Jacob and it seems as if his life, as far as the virtue of chastity is concerned, is preferred to that of the biblical figures. Malchus is likewise compared to Joseph, who is regarded as the ideal type of chastity, because he resisted the temptations of Potiphar's wife, but Joseph did marry later and had children, while Malchus preserves

---

Jerome in Syriac," in Cain and Lössl, *Jerome of Stridon*, 213, for his remarks on Jerome's self-presentation as a Syrian ascetic.

- 38 De Vogüé, in Pierre Leclerc and Edgardo M. Morales, *Jérôme. Trois Vies*, 78: "Son union parfaitement chaste avec sa compagne ressemble au couple de Jérôme et Paula en ces premières années palestiniennes où fut écrite la *Vita Malchi*. Celle-ci apparaît comme une allégorie de la double fondation latine de Bethléem."
- 39 Mark Vessey, "Jerome's Origen: The Making of a Christian Literary *Persona*," in *Studia Patristica*, vol. 28, ed. Elizabeth A. Livingstone, papers presented at the 11th International Conference on Patristic Studies, Oxford 1991 (Leuven: Peeters, 1993), 135–45.
- 40 Jerome, with the sponsorship of Paula and Eustochium, also founded the monastery and the convent in Bethlehem where they lived. See Rebenich, *Jerome*, 41.
- 41 See John N.D. Kelly, *Jerome: His Life, Writings and Controversies* (London: Duckworth, 1975), 131.
- 42 The idea that Jerome perhaps envisaged a similar 'living together in chastity' for Paula and himself is suggested in Koos Kritzinger, "Preaching Chastity: A 'Spatial Reading' of Jerome's *Vita Malchi*," *Scrinium* 9 (2013): 91–106.
- 43 See Kelly, *Jerome*, 109, for rumours and gossip about Jerome and Paula's relationship.

his chastity till the end. Malchus and his companion's experience in the cave (the so-called first cave episode) is contrasted with the cave experience of the famous Roman hero, Aeneas and his companion, Dido; while the former pair preserved their chastity, the latter pair yielded to temptation, which finally led to abandonment and suicide. The comparison of the colony of ants with a monastery plays an important role in Malchus' decision to escape and the allusion to a similar scene in *Aeneid* draws attention to the contrasts between the two couples. Without mentioning the name of Daniel explicitly, the ordeal of Malchus and his companion in the cave (in the second cave episode) resembles the experience of Daniel in the lions' den, but there are also telling differences.

The main similarity in the different situations lies in the fact that amidst danger and fear, both parties preserve the virtues which they were willing to die for. Through a comparison of the lives of Malchus and his 'wife' with the 'life of the church', their virtuous/chaste behaviour is contrasted with the decline in virtues noticeable in the church of the late fourth century. Finally, the correspondences between the heroes of *Vita Malchi* and Jerome and Paula, suggest that Jerome strongly identifies with the promotion of the monastic ideal and especially the virtue of chastity. Malchus seems to be an ordinary man, but he is compared to Zachariah, Adam, Joseph, Jacob, Moses, and Daniel. As a result of his willingness to die as a martyr for chastity and his perseverance in preserving this virtue, the chaste monk is extolled to an even higher level than some of the biblical characters with whom he is compared. Malchus' identity is shaped by the comparisons and to a larger extent by the contrasts with all the other characters discussed. One remarkable aspect, which has not been pointed out previously, is the impact of the contrasts which are implied by direct references as well as by allusions to similar classical and biblical narratives. The reason for not mentioning the contrasts with characters such as Joseph, Jacob and Moses, might be out of reverence for the biblical characters, but the silence paradoxically speaks more strongly than the words. Once Jerome's strategy is recognised in the first part of the narrative (with the allusion to Joseph, the brief reference to Jacob and Moses and the allusions to Aeneas and Dido) it is easier to discover correspondences with episodes from the narratives of John the Baptist and also the prophet Daniel. It seems as if Jerome has limited the explicit references to the minimum in *Vita Malchi*, while still providing enough clues for the informed reader to make the necessary connections. What seems at the first reading to be a very simple story was composed extremely skilfully and reveals through a close reading much more depth than is imagined at first. Cameron<sup>44</sup> had indeed good reason to call *Vita Malchi* "a narrative of contrived

---

44 Averil Cameron, *Christianity and the Rhetoric of the Empire: The Development of Christian Discourse* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1991), 182.



simplicity.”<sup>45</sup> I hope to have shown that by using the textual strategies of comparison and contrast skilfully, but often in a very subtle manner, Jerome succeeds in shaping the identity of the chaste monk, or rather the identities of the chaste monk and nun, in his description of the lives of Malchus and his companion.

### Bibliography

- Jerome. *Vita Malchi* (Pierre Leclerc, Edgardo M. Morales, and Adalbert de Vogüé, eds, *Jérôme. Trois Vies de moines [Paul, Malchus, Hilarion]*, SC, vol. 508. Paris: Éditions du Cerf, 2007).
- Botha, Philippus J., and Jacobus P.K. Kritzinger. “Rhetoric and Argument in Chapter VI of Jerome’s *Vita Malchi*.” *Ekklesiastikos Pharos* 95 (2013): 283–93.
- Cameron, Averil. *Christianity and the Rhetoric of the Empire: The Development of Christian Discourse*. Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1991.
- De Vogüé, Adalbert. *Histoire littéraire du mouvement monastique dans l’Antiquité. Première partie: Le monachisme latin de l’itinéraire d’Égérie à l’éloge funèbre de Népotien (384–396)*. Paris: Éditions du Cerf, 1993.
- Hagdahl, Harald. *Latin Fathers and the Classics: A Study of the Apologists, Jerome and Other Christian Writers*, *Studia Graeca et Latina Gothoburgensia*, vol. 6. Stockholm: Almqvist and Wiksell, 1958.
- Kelly, John N.D. *Jerome: His Life, Writings and Controversies*. London: Duckworth, 1975.
- King, Daniel. “*Vir Quadrilinguis?* Syriac in Jerome and Jerome in Syriac.” In *Jerome of Stridon. His Life, Writings and Legacy*, edited by Andrew Cain and Josef Lössl, 209–23. Farnham: Ashgate, 2009.
- Kritzinger, Jacobus P.K., and Philippus J. Botha. “The Significance of the Second Cave Episode in the *Vita Malchi*.” *HTS Theologies Studies/Theological Studies* 70(1) (2014): <http://dx.doi.org/10.4102/hts.v70i1.2004>.
- Kritzinger, Koos. “Preaching Chastity: A ‘Spatial Reading’ of Jerome’s *Vita Malchi*.” *Scrinium* 9 (2013): 91–106.
- Lenski, Noel. “Captivity and Slavery among the Saracens in Late Antiquity (ca. 250–630 CE).” *AnTard* 19 (2011): 237–66.
- Rebenich, Stefan. *Jerome, The Early Church Fathers*. London: Routledge, 2002.

---

45 In a recent article by Philippus J. Botha and Jacobus P.K. Kritzinger “Rhetoric and Argument in Chapter VI of Jerome’s *Vita Malchi*,” *Ekklesiastikos Pharos* 95 (2013): 283–93, a detailed rhetorical analysis of the sixth chapter of this work further illustrates the density and skilful employment of rhetorical figures in this seemingly simple narrative.



- . “Inventing an Ascetic Hero: Jerome’s Life of Paul the First Hermit.” In *Jerome of Stridon: His Life, Writings and Legacy*, edited by Andrew Cain and Josef Lössl, 13–27. Farnham: Ashgate, 2009.
- Vessey, Mark. “Jerome’s Origen: The Making of a Christian Literary Persona.” In *Studia Patristica*, vol. 28, edited by Elizabeth A. Livingstone, papers presented at the 11th International Conference on Patristic Studies, Oxford 1991, 135–45. Leuven: Peeters, 1993.
- Weingarten, Susan. *The Saint’s Saints: Hagiography and Geography in Jerome, Ancient Judaism and Early Christianity*, vol. 58. Leiden: Brill, 2005.

# Augustine's Scriptural Exegesis in *De sermone Domini in monte* and the Shaping of Christian Perfection

Naoki Kamimura

## 1 Introduction

Augustine's ordination into the priesthood (January 391) made a significant and immediate difference in his life. With the approval of his bishop, Valerius, Augustine had obtained a few weeks' sabbatical, during which he began to study the scriptures.<sup>1</sup> By this time Augustine had already written two commentaries on Genesis and some expositions on Psalms, and he started his work as a priest by teaching the catechism.<sup>2</sup> Within two years, the assembled bishops of the African church were listening to Augustine's doctrinal exposition of the creed (October 393).<sup>3</sup> Soon after, he undertook the task of composing his extended exegetical work on the New Testament, *De sermone Domini in monte*.<sup>4</sup> Augustine divides this commentary into two books of almost equal length, the first of which explicates the fifth chapter of Matthew, and the second develops a theology of prayer.

While the importance of Augustine's commentaries on the New Testament has become widely understood, there has been relatively little attention given to this work.<sup>5</sup> It has been eclipsed by his special concerns for the Pauline epistles: "nothing would be more revealing for an understanding of Augustine's

1 See Serge Lancel, *Saint Augustine*, trans. Antonia Nevill (London: SCM Press, 2002), 152. See Augustine, *Serm.* 355.2 (NBA 34.246); and idem, *Ep.* 21.3–4 (NBA 21/1.102).

2 See Augustine, *Serm.* 214 (NBA 32/1.218–34) and 216 (NBA 32/1.248–62).

3 Augustine, *Retr.* 1.17 (NBA 2.100).

4 On the chronological analysis see Almut Mutzenbecher, *Sancti Aurelii Augustini: De sermone Domini in monte libros duos*, CCL, vol. 35 (Turnhout: Brepols, 1967), vii–ix. See also Augustine, *Retr.* 1.19.1 (NBA 2.104).

5 In general on the importance of this work see Domenico Bassi, "Le beatitudini nella struttura del «De sermone Domini in monte» e nelle altre opere di s. Agostino," in *Miscellanea Agostiniana*, vol. 2: *Studi Agostiniani* (Rome: Tipografia Poliglotta Vaticana, 1931), 915–31; and D. Gentili, "Introduzione," in *Il discorso della montagna*, Piccola biblioteca agostiniana, vol. 15 (Rome: Città Nuova, 1991), 5–16.

theology than a full study of what Paul meant for him.<sup>6</sup> However, it is interesting to note that, around the same time when he endeavoured to write the mutually different kinds of commentary on the Pauline epistles (394–395),<sup>7</sup> he had a continuing interest in the problem of the shaping of Christian perfection. Not only did he argue about the process by which the soul directs itself to God and seeks its own purification, but gave the reader his instruction on how to benefit the spiritual and moral state of mind. In what follows, by focusing on the initial part of his commentary on the Sermon on the Mount, I shall examine first Augustine's interpretation of the Matthean beatitudes (Matt 5:3–10) and investigate how his interpretation is remarkably consistent with many of his predecessors in the exegetical tradition. Second, I offer an explanation as to why Augustine attempted to connect the beatitudes with the sevenfold operation of the Holy Spirit in Isaiah 11:2–3. Finally, I suggest even more tentatively some significance in how he understood the beatitudes of Matthew according to his view of the prophetic ascent of the soul. It secures a future basis for human perfection.

## 2 Augustine's Exegesis of the Sermon on the Mount

The Sermon on the Mount, offered in chapters 5 to 7 of the Gospel of Matthew, is the first of Jesus' five major speeches or extended 'discourses' found in Matthew 5–7; 10; 13; 18; and 22–25. It is explicitly linked with the Sermon on the Plain in Luke 6: 20–49, where the beatitudes appear to be abruptly contrasted in an eschatological discourse. We read in Matthew that a programme of virtuous life is crowned by the promise of a heavenly reward.<sup>8</sup> It is noteworthy that the Matthean beatitudes declare 'blessed' some surprising people,<sup>9</sup> and three parts to each saying are consistently maintained: for instance, (1) Blessed are (2) the poor in spirit, (3) for theirs is the kingdom of heaven (Matt 5:3); and

6 Robert A. Markus, "Augustine's Pauline Legacies," in *Paul and the Legacies of Paul*, ed. William S. Babcock (Dallas: Southern Methodist University Press, 1990), 224.

7 See Daniel Patte and Eugene TeSelle, eds, *Engaging Augustine On Romans: Self, Context, and Theology in Interpretation* (Harrisburg, Pa: Trinity Press, 2002); and Eric Plumer, *Augustine's Commentary on Galatians: Introduction, Text, Translation, and Notes*, OECs (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003).

8 Lancel, *Saint Augustine*, 177. On the Sermon on the Mount see e.g., Dale C. Allison, Jr, "The Structure of the Sermon on the Mount," *JBL* 106 (1987): 423–45; and Daniel J. Harrington, *The Gospel of Matthew*, Sacra Pagina, vol. 1 (Collegeville, Minn.: Liturgical Press, 1991).

9 This is a literary form common in Psalms. See e.g., Ps 1:1; 32:1–2; 41:1; 65:4; 84:4–5; 106:3; 112:1; and 128:1.

(1) Blessed are (2) the meek, (3) for they shall inherit the earth (Matt 5:4). In explaining the Matthean texts in the first book of *De sermone Domini in monte*,<sup>10</sup> after some introductory comments, Augustine immediately focuses on the Matthean beatitudes. First, with the divisions of the sermon that he is interpreting, he attends to certain characteristics that mark a person who is blessed: “can the poor in spirit be understood as those who are humble and fear God—who do not, in other words, possess an inflated spirit.”<sup>11</sup> Augustine affirms that the beatitude “theirs is the kingdom of heaven” is granted to those who practise the requisite morality, that is, humility and the fear of God. Working his way through the text, he also explains that the beatitude states what it is one would possess if one were to become happy.

‘Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth’ (Mt 5:4). I believe that the earth referred to here is the one spoken of in the Psalms: ‘You are my hope, my heritage in the land of the living’ (Ps 142:5). It indicates that the eternal inheritance has a kind of solidity and stability where the soul, possessed of true affection, rests in its own place.<sup>12</sup>

Augustine searches for the hidden meaning and the latent usefulness of ‘the earth’. By giving a figurative interpretation of the psalm, he appreciates the spiritual value of ‘the earth’ from which the soul draws its ‘food’. And those who attain to “the life of the wise person who has attained the summit of perfection”<sup>13</sup> are described as follows:

10 Augustine, *Serm. Dom. mont.* 1.1.3–1.2.9 (NBA 10/2.84–88). When engaged in this commentary, Augustine did not accept the Vulgate Gospels. The Augustinian text seems to show the African version in a later stage of its evolution and/or to follow the Old Latin readings. See Jos Mizzi, “The Latin Text of Matt. v–vii in St. Augustine’s *De sermone domini in monte*,” *Augustiniana* 4 (1954): 450–94. See also Donatien De Bruyne, “Saint Augustin reviseur de la Bible,” in *Miscellanea Agostiniana*, vol. 2: *Studi Agostiniani* (Rome: Tipografia Poliglotta Vaticana, 1931), 594–99.

11 Augustine, *Serm. Dom. mont.* 1.1.3 (NBA 10/2.84): “intelleguntur pauperes spiritu humiles et timentes Deum, id est non habentes inflantem spiritum.” English translation in Michael G. Campbell, Kim Paffenroth, and Roland Teske, *New Testament I and II*, WSA, 1/15 and 16 (Hyde Park, N.Y.: New City Press, 2014).

12 Augustine, *Serm. Dom. mont.* 1.2.4 (NBA 10/2.86): “*Beati mites, quoniam ipsi haereditae possidebunt terram, illam credo terram de qua in Psalmis dicitur: Spes mea es tu, portio mea in terra uiuentium.* Significat enim quandam soliditatem et stabilitatem haereditatis perpetuae, ubi anima per bonum affectum tamquam loco suo requiescit.”

13 *Ibid.*, 1.2.9 (NBA 10/2.88): “haec uita consummati perfectique sapientis.”

those who order all the affections of the soul and subject them to reason—that is, to the mind and to the spirit—... become the kingdom of God. In that kingdom everything is ordered in such a way that what distinguishes and is surpassing in man rules over those other things... And so that very thing which is outstanding in man, his mind and reason, becomes subject to one who is more powerful, Truth itself, the only-begotten Son of God.<sup>14</sup>

This image of the *sapiens*, fertilised by his fascination with the idea of order, sets the reader a conceptual goal of joining, rather than merely juxtaposing, the eternal and temporal realms. The explanation of perfection provides an understanding of the spiritual and ontological position of human beings between the lower and higher things. It is the natural consequence of Augustine's conception of the 'order', which situates all the things in their proper positions according to the hierarchical system of the universe.<sup>15</sup>

Augustine's exegesis at this stage carefully treats the figurative meaning of the individual beatitude and its ultimate state. Moreover, the virtuousness would be construed as the necessary condition for its future inhabitants of the "most peaceful and ordered kingdom,"<sup>16</sup> for the emphasis on the relationship between the beatitudes and human values continues clearly throughout his exegesis. Augustine regards the exercise of the virtues as the indispensable starting point for the perfection of human life. Hence, he probably attempts to elucidate the morality of those who wish to live in accordance with the Matthean precepts in the present and future.<sup>17</sup>

To appreciate Augustine's exegesis, we need to keep in mind the basic structure of his understanding. Note the repetition of his interpretation on the Sermon on the Mount: first, as mentioned above, he explains the beatitudes respectively and according to the segments of the sermon (1.1.3–1.2.9); then,

14 Ibid.: "Pacifici... in semet ipsis sunt, qui omnes animi sui motus componentes et subicientes rationi, id est menti et spiritu... fiunt regnum Dei, in quo ita sunt ordinata omnia, ut id quod est in homine praecipuum et excellens, hoc imperet ceteri... atque id ipsum quod excellit in homine, id est mens et ratio subiciatur potiori, quod est ipsa veritas unigenitus Dei Filius."

15 On order in the early works of Augustine see Émilie Zum Brunn, *Le dilemme de l'être et du néant chez Saint Augustin: des premiers dialogues aux «Confessions»*, Bochumer Studien zur Philosophie, vol. 4, 2nd ed. (Amsterdam: B.R. Grüner, 1984).

16 Augustine, *Serm. Dom. mont.* 1.2.9 (NBA 10/2.88): "regno pacatissimo et ordinatissimo."

17 With regard to the optimistic view of human perfection in this work see Brian Dobell, *Augustine's Intellectual Conversion: The Journey from Platonism to Christianity* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 92–93.

he raises concerns about the number and order of the maxims and connects the Matthean beatitudes with the seven gifts of the Holy Spirit of Isaiah 11:2–3 (1.3.10–1.4.11); and again, by setting forth the ascending paradigm of the beatitudes, he clarifies the significance of the Matthean texts (1.4.11–12). Why does Augustine come to repeat the interpretation of the Sermon on the Mount? Indeed, in his first exegesis, the fifth and sixth beatitudes are explained very briefly (1.2.7), whereas the first and seventh beatitudes are clarified in detail from both the figurative and moral standpoint. Why does Augustine leave the first interpretation incomplete? Before addressing these questions, we shall examine the possible influences of the exegetical tradition on Augustine's explanation.

### 3 The Main Sources of Augustine's Exegesis

With regard to his New Testament commentary, scholars have considered the possibility of Augustine's dependence on two predecessors' interpretations: one is Ambrose's *Expositio euangelii secundum Lucam* and the other is Gregory of Nyssa's *Orationes viii de beatitudinibus*. While the chronological questions concerning both Ambrose's *Expositio* and Gregory's *Orationes* do not permit an exact dating, available evidence suggests that these works were written several years before Augustine wrote his commentary. After his own deliberate revision of many homilies preached over a decade, Ambrose published his *Expositio* before 389–390;<sup>18</sup> and Gregory's *Orationes* are most likely to have been written during the persecution under Valens before 378.<sup>19</sup> Thus, on the provision that he could have read these texts, some scholars have reached a general agreement that Augustine's exegesis in *De sermone Domini in monte*, while not being compliant, follows Ambrose's explanations, whereas some similarities with the Gregorian interpretations require further confirmation.<sup>20</sup> Because

18 See Giovanni Coppa, "Introduzione," in *Sant' Ambrogio. Opera exegetiche*, vol. 9/1: *Esposizione del vangelo secondo Luca*, SAEMO, vol. 11 (Milan: Biblioteca Ambrosiana, 1978), 22–25, esp. 24, nn. 66 and 67; and Tschang, "Octo Beatitudines" (PhD diss., Bonn, 1986).

19 See Stuart George Hall, "Gregory of Nyssa, *On the Beatitudes*: An Introduction to the Text and Translation," in *Gregory of Nyssa: Homilies on the Beatitudes. An English Version with Commentary and Supporting Studies. Proceedings of the Eighth International Colloquium on Gregory of Nyssa (Paderborn, 14–18 September 1998)*, ed. Hubertus R. Drobner and Albert Viciano, VCSupp, vol. 52 (Leiden: Brill, 2000), 15.

20 On this see Adolf Holl, *Augustins Bergpredigtexegese* (Wien: Herder, 1960); Mutzenbecher, *Sancti Aurelii Augustini*, xiii–xvii; Frederick Van Fleteren, "Sermone domini in monte, De," in *Augustine through the Ages: An Encyclopedia*, ed. Allan D. Fitzgerald (Grand Rapids,

Augustine seems to have known precious little about the Greek language,<sup>21</sup> it is likely that he did not read Gregory's *Orationes* in translation either. One may conclude that in the North African Christian communities, Gregory's exegesis might have been known through an oral tradition.<sup>22</sup> In what follows, therefore, by focusing on Augustine's commentary on the Matthean beatitudes, I examine the extent to which two theologians—Gregory and Ambrose—exerted influence on the first part of Augustine's exegesis.

### 3.1 “*Blessed are the Poor in Spirit*” (*Matt 5:3*)

The first beatitude is now connected with a passage from 2 Corinthians by both Gregory and Ambrose. At this point, Augustine does not accept their interpretations. We may begin with Gregory, who writes:

We learn of two kinds of wealth in scripture, one sought after and one condemned. Sought after is the wealth of the virtues, and blamed, the material and earthly, because the one becomes the property of the soul, the other is bound up with the deceitfulness of perceptible things. . . . The Word seems to me to be using the words ‘*poor in spirit*’ to mean ‘*voluntary humility*’. The model for this is indicated by the Apostle when he speaks of the humility of God, ‘*who, though he was rich, yet for our sakes became poor, so that we by his poverty might become rich*’ (2 Cor 8,9).<sup>23</sup>

---

Mich.: W.B. Eerdmans, 1999), 771; Charles Kannengiesser, *Handbook of Patristic Exegesis: The Bible of Ancient Christianity*, vol. 2 (Leiden: Brill, 2004), 1173; and Boniface Ramsey, “Introduction,” in Campbell, Paffenroth, and Teske, *New Testament I and II*, 13–14.

21 See e.g., Lancel, *Saint Augustine*, 15–16.

22 See Van Fleteren, “*Sermone domini in monte, De*,” 771. On the rejection of Gregory's influence upon Augustine see Berthold Altaner, “Augustinus und Gregor von Nazianz, Gregor von Nyssa,” in *Kleine Patristische Schriften*, ed. Günther Glockmann, TU, Bd 83 (Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 1967), 285.

23 Gregory of Nyssa, *De beat.* 1.3–4 (GNO 7/2.81–83): δύο πλούτους παρά τῆς γραφῆς μεμαθήκαμεν, ἓνα σπουδαζόμενον καὶ ἓνα κατακρινόμενον. σπουδάζεται μὲν οὖν ὁ τῶν ἀρετῶν πλοῦτος, διαβάλλεται δὲ ὁ ὑλικός τε καὶ γήϊνος, ὅτι ὁ μὲν τῆς ψυχῆς γίνεται κτῆμα, οὗτος δὲ πρὸς τὴν τῶν αἰσθητηρίων ἀπάτην ἐπιτηδείως ἔχει. . . . δοκεῖ μοι πτωχείαν πνεύματος τὴν ἐκούσιον ταπεινοφροσύνην ὀνομάζειν ὁ λόγος. ταύτης δὲ ὑπόδειγμα τὴν τοῦ θεοῦ πτωχείαν ὁ ἀπόστολος ἡμῖν λέγων προδείκνυσιν, ὅς δι’ ἡμᾶς ἐπτώχευσε πλούσιος ὢν, ἵνα ἡμεῖς τῇ ἐκείνου πτωχείᾳ πλουτήσωμεν. English translation in Hall, “Gregory of Nyssa, *On the Beatitudes*.” The emphasis in this and all subsequent passages is mine.

Ambrose writes:

*although He was rich, He became poor for our sake (cf. 2 Cor 8:9). Hence, Matthew fully revealed, saying, 'Blessed are the poor in spirit,' for a man poor in spirit is not puffed up, is not exalted in the mind of his own flesh.*<sup>24</sup>

As we have noted already, Augustine states:

can the poor in spirit be understood as those who are humble and fear God—who do not, in other words, possess an inflated spirit.<sup>25</sup>

Augustine relies partially upon Ambrose's exposition because he explicitly refers to the Ambrosian definition of the 'poor in spirit'. However, it must be admitted that Ambrose follows Gregory when connecting Matthew 5:3 to 2 Corinthians 8:9. Gregory interprets the passage to explain a real possibility for human nature from the viewpoint of the incarnation of Christ. He discusses the fact that the ideal of the virtuous life is not possible for human nature in this mortal life. God by his Incarnation gave us the divine humility, which we can imitate.<sup>26</sup> The change from the imitation of God to the imitation of Christ is not obvious in Augustine's exegesis. Rather, Augustine accepts the possibility of obtaining this condition in the apostles.<sup>27</sup> It is clear that the Gregorian discovery that the imitation of God is to be found in the humility of Christ has an echo in Augustine's reference to human humility. The distinction between the earthly and heavenly matter appears in both texts. By positing that Augustine read or heard Gregory's homily, we can explain the influence of Gregory upon Augustine's exegesis of this passage of Matthew.

24 Ambrose, *Exp. in Luc.* 5.53 (SC 45bis.202): "qui cum diues esset, propter nos pauper factus est. Vnde plene Mattaeus aperuit dicens: *beati pauperes spiritu*; pauper enim spiritu non inflatur, non extollitur mente carnis suae." English translation in Theodosia Tomkinson, *Exposition of the Holy Gospel according to Saint Luke: Saint Ambrose of Milan*, 2nd ed. (Etna, Calif.: Center for Traditionalist Orthodox Studies, 2003).

25 See n.11.

26 See Anthony Meredith, "De beatitudinibus, Oratio 1: 'Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven' (Mt 5,3)," in Drobner and Viciano, *Gregory of Nyssa: Homilies on the Beatitudes*, 97–98.

27 Augustine, *Serm. Dom. mont.* 1.4.11 (NBA 10/2.92). See n.14; and Canisius van Lierde, "The Teaching of St. Augustine on the Gifts of the Holy Spirit from the Text of Isaiah 11:2–3," in *Collectanea Augustiniana. Augustine: Mystic and Mystagogue*, ed. Frederik Van Fleteren, Joseph C. Schnaubelt, and Joseph Reino (New York: Peter Lang, 1994), 104, n.282.



### 3.2 “Blessed are the Sorrowful, for They Shall be Comforted” (Matt 5:5)

Ambrose does not make explicit reference to this passage. Both the explanations of Gregory and Augustine may be considered. Gregory writes:

so that we may learn what that sorrow is to which *the comfort of the Holy Spirit* is offered. . . . Sorrow consists of a state of mind resentful at the loss of something the heart was set upon, and for it the life of those who enjoy contentment leaves no room. . . . *grief is a painful sense of the loss of things that give happiness.*<sup>28</sup>

Augustine writes:

*Sorrow is sadness at the loss of what we hold dear.* But those who have turned to God let go of the things which they held dear in this world. They no longer find pleasure in them as they once did . . . *The Holy Spirit* will therefore comfort them, because *he is first and foremost named the Paraclete, or Consoler.*<sup>29</sup>

These explanations of grief and comfort are similar. Grief is the loss of those things that bring about happiness in the temporal life. Augustine’s preservation of the ‘Paraclete’ terminology is probably dependent upon Gregory’s concise interpretation of sorrow. In most cases, indeed, the expression used by Augustine of the Holy Spirit refers to his understanding of Mani’s identification with the Paraclete.<sup>30</sup> He repeatedly criticises the Manichaean claim from

28 Gregory of Nyssa, *De beat.* 3.3–4 (GNO 7/2.102–103): ὡς ἂν μάθοιμεν ποίῳ πένθει πρόκειται ἡ τοῦ πνεύματος τοῦ ἀγίου παράκλησις . . . ὅτι πένθος ἐστὶ σκυθρωπὴ διάθεσις τῆς ψυχῆς ἐπὶ στερήσει τινός τῶν καταθυμίων συνισταμένη, ὅπερ ἐπὶ τῶν ἐν εὐθυμίᾳ διαβιούντων συνίστασθαι χάραν οὐκ ἔχει . . . ὅτι πένθος ἐστὶν αἰσθησίς τις ἀλγεινῆ τῆς τῶν εὐφραϊνόντων στερήσεως.

29 Augustine, *Serm. Dom. mont.* 1.2.5 (NBA 10/2.86): “Luctus est tristitia de amissione carorum. Conuersi autem ad Deum ea quae in hoc mundo cara amplectebantur, amittunt; non enim gaudent his rebus, quibus ante gaudebant . . . Consolabuntur ergo Spiritu Sancto, qui maxime propterea paraclytus nominatur, id est consolator.”

30 See e.g., Augustine, *Cont. Fort.* 22 (NBA 13/1.306–10); idem, *Cont. Adim.* 17.5 (NBA 13/2.194–96); idem, *Cont. ep. Man.* 5.6 (NBA 13/2.306–308); 6.7 (NBA 13/2.310–12); 7.8 (NBA 13/2.312–14); 8.9 (NBA 13/2.314–18); 9.10 (NBA 13/2.318–20); and 13.17 (NBA 13/2.328). On the Paraclete see François Decret, “Le problème du Saint Esprit dans le système manichéen,” in *Studia Patristica*, vol. 27, ed. Elizabeth A. Livingstone, papers presented at the 11th International Conference on Patristic Studies, Oxford 1991 (Leuven: Peeters, 1993), 271; and James J. O’Donnell, *Augustine: Confessions*, vol. 3: *Commentary on Books 8–13* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1992), 97.

the viewpoint of the Catholic understanding of the Trinity and the incarnation. Augustine's exceptional use of 'Paraclete' in *De sermone Domini in monte* would confirm that he was familiar with Gregory's exegesis.

### 3.3 "Blessed are Those Who Hunger and Thirst for Righteousness, for They Shall be Satisfied" (Matt 5:6)

Gregory and Augustine devote their attention to the passages from John, thereby enabling us to see the significance of their allegorical interpretations.

Gregory of Nyssa writes:

*My food is to do the will of my Father*' (Jn 4:34). The will of his Father is clear: he 'wants all people to be saved, and to come to knowledge of the truth' (1 Tim 2,4)... we should hunger for our own salvation; we should thirst for what God wills, which is that we should be saved. How is it possible for us to achieve a hunger of this kind, we have now come to understand through the Beatitude. *The person who longs for the justice of God has found what is truly to be craved*, the desire for which is not satisfied by just one of the ways in which appetite operates... *this good has been made also a matter of drinking*, so that the fervour and heat of the passion may be indicated by the feeling of thirst.<sup>31</sup>

Augustine writes:

Such people he declares to be lovers of that good which is true and steadfast. *They will find satisfaction in that food* of which the Lord himself says, *'My food is to do the will of my Father'* (Jn 4:34), *which is righteousness, and with that water* of which he says that, whoever drinks of it, 'it shall become in him a spring of water, welling up to eternal life' (Jn 4:14).<sup>32</sup>

31 Gregory of Nyssa, *De beat.* 4.4 (GNO 7/2.116–17): 'Ἐμὸν βρῶμά ἐστιν ἵνα ποιῶ τὸ θέλημα τοῦ πατρὸς μου· φανερὸν δὲ τοῦ πατρὸς ἐστὶ τὸ θέλημα, ὃς πάντας ἀνθρώπους θέλει σωθῆναι καὶ εἰς ἐπίγνωσιν ἀληθείας ἔλθειν... πεινάσωμεν τὴν ἑαυτῶν σωτηρίαν, διψήσωμεν τοῦ θεοῦ θελήματος, ὅπερ ἐστὶ τὸ ἡμᾶς σωθῆναι. πῶς οὖν ἔστι τὴν τοιαύτην ἡμῖν κατορθωθῆναι πείναν νῦν παρὰ τοῦ μακαρισμοῦ μεμαθήκαμεν. ὁ γὰρ τὴν δικαιοσύνην τοῦ θεοῦ ποθήσας εἶδεν τὸ ἀληθῶς ὀρεκτόν, οὗ τὴν ἐπιθυμίαν οὐχ ἐνὶ τρόπῳ τῶν κατὰ τὴν ὄψεσιν ἐνεργουμένων ἐπλήρωσεν... νυνὶ δὲ καὶ πότιμον τὸ ἀγαθὸν τοῦτο ἐποίησεν, ἵνα τὸ ἔνθερμόν τε καὶ διακαές τῆς ἐπιθυμίας τῷ πάθει τῆς δίψης ἐνδείξῃται.

32 Augustine, *Serm. Dom. mont.* 1.2.6 (NBA 10/2.86): "Iam istos amatores dicit ueri et inconcussi boni. Illo ergo cibo saturabuntur de quo ipse Dominus dicit: *Meus cibus est ut faciam uoluntatem Patris mei*, quod est iustitia, et illa aqua de qua quisquis biberit, ut idem dicit: *Fiet in eo fons aquae salientis in uitam aeternam.*"

Although Augustine repeatedly refers to the phrases of John 4:14 and 4:34 in his corpus, only here in *De sermone Domini in monte*, as far as I can determine, does he expound on John 4:34 in connection with John 4:14. He offers an allegorical understanding of ‘food’ and ‘water’. The Lord’s food is to fulfil the will of God. The Lord’s water is to fulfil the divine will of salvation. Thus, in this exegesis, Augustine identifies the justice of God with human salvation. His remark on the understanding of justice and salvation probably goes back to Gregory. Moreover, this allegorical interpretation of food and water is characteristic of Origen. Because Origen’s explanations of Matthew 5:6 preserves a close linkage between ‘the bread’ and ‘living water’ in his fragmentary Matthean commentary,<sup>33</sup> it seems probable that an overview of the commentaries by both Gregory and Augustine would regard Origen as the source of their allegorical interpretations.

### 3.4 “Blessed are the Peacemakers” (Matt 5:9)

Gregory of Nyssa writes:

The reason why he calls the peace maker a son of God, is that *he becomes an imitator of the true Son who has bestowed these things on human life* . . . How then can the distributor of the divine benefits not be blessed, the imitator of the gifts of God, the one who makes his own good deeds resemble the divine generosity? Yet perhaps the Beatitudes does not apply only to the good of others. I think that strictly it is correct to call ‘peacemaker’ *the one who brings to a peacemaker concord the strife within himself of flesh and spirit, the civil war in his nature*, when the law of the body which campaigns against the law of the mind is no longer effective, but *is subjugated to the higher kingdom and becomes a servant of the divine commandments*.<sup>34</sup>

33 Origen, *Fragmenta in Matthaeum* 83 (GCS 41/1.49). See Robert Louis Wilken, “*De beatitudinibus*, Oratio VIII,” in Drobner and Viciano, *Gregory of Nyssa: Homilies on the Beatitudes*, 249–50.

34 Gregory of Nyssa, *De beat.* 7.4–5 (GNO 7/2.159–60): διὰ τοῦτο υἱὸν θεοῦ τὸν εἰρηνοποιὸν ὀνομάζει, ὅτι μιμητῆς γίνεται τοῦ ἀληθινοῦ υἱοῦ ὁ ταῦτα τῆ τῶν ἀνθρώπων ζωῆ χαριζόμενος . . . πῶς οὖν οὐ μακάριος ὁ τῶν θεῶν δωρεῶν διανομέυς, ὁ μιμητῆς τῶν τοῦ θεοῦ χαρισμάτων, ὁ τῆ θείᾳ μεγαλοδωρεᾷ τὰς ἰδίας συνεξομιῶν εὐποιῆας; τάχα δὲ οὐ πρὸς τὸ ἀλλότριον ἀγαθὸν μόνον ὁ μακαρισμὸς βλέπει· ἀλλ’ οἶμαι κυρίως εἰρηνοποιὸν χρηματίζειν τὸν τὴν ἐν ἑαυτῷ στάσιν τῆς σαρκὸς καὶ τοῦ πνεύματος καὶ τὸν ἐμφύλιον τῆς φύσεως πόλεμον εἰς εἰρηνικὴν συμφωνίαν ἄγοντα, ὅταν μηκέτι ἐνεργὸς ᾖ ὁ τοῦ σώματος νόμος ὁ ἀντιστρατευόμενος τῷ νόμῳ τοῦ νοῦς ἀλλ’ ὑποξευχθεὶς τῇ κρείττονι βασιλείᾳ ὑπηρέτης γένηται τῶν θεῶν ἐπιταγμάτων.

Ambrose writes:

But unless ye first empty your inner heart of every stain of sin, lest dissensions and contentions proceed from your conduct, ye cannot bring the remedy to others. So bring peace from yourself, so that *when you have been a peacemaker, you will bring peace to others*. For how can ye cleanse the hearts of others, unless ye have first cleansed your own?<sup>35</sup>

Augustine writes:

But those who order all the affections of the soul and subject them to reason—that is, to the mind and to the spirit—and have subdued the desires of the flesh are peacemakers within themselves and become the kingdom of God. In that kingdom everything is ordered in such a way that what distinguishes and is surpassing in man rules over those other things which do not resist and which we have in common with the animals. And so that very thing which is outstanding in man, his mind and reason, becomes subject to one who is more powerful, Truth itself, the only-begotten son of God.<sup>36</sup>

The exegetical point Gregory adopts and exploits in his commentary is that the 'peacemaker' enjoys the tranquillity of his inner state of mind and of his contact with others. Then, he regards one who establishes the correct order as the 'imitator' of divine nature and as the 'distributor' of divine benevolence. Ambrose focuses on the former aspect of the 'peacemaker',<sup>37</sup> and Augustine refers to the latter feature of the 'peacemaker'.

35 Ambrose, *Exp. in Luc.* 5.58 (SC 45bis.204): "Sed nisi tu prius interiora tua uacuefeceris ab omni labe peccati, ne dissensiones contentionesque ex adfectu tuo prodeant, non potes aliis ferre medicinam. A te igitur pacem incipe, ut, cum fueris ipse pacificus, pacem aliis feras; quomodo enim potes aliorum corda mundate, nisi tua ante mundaueris?"

36 Augustine, *Serm. Dom. mont.* 1.2.9 (NBA 10/2.88): "Pacifici autem in semet ipsis sunt, qui omnes animi sui motus componentes et subicientes rationi, id est menti et spiritui, carnalesque concupiscentias habentes edomitas fiunt regnum Dei, in quo ita sunt ordinata omnia, ut id quod est in homine praecipuum et excellens, hoc imperet ceteris non reluctantibus, quae sunt nobis bestiisque communia, atque id ipsum quod excellit in homine, id est mens et ratio subiciatur potiori, quod est ipsa ueritas unigenitus Dei Filius."

37 On this see Piero Rollero, *La «Expositio Evangelii secundum Lucam» di Ambrogio come fonte della esegesi agostiniana* (Turin: Università di Torino, 1958), 38 and n.60.

### 3.5 *The Arrangement and Order of the Beatitudes*

Gregory of Nyssa writes:

I think the arrangement of the Beatitudes is like a series of rungs, and it makes it possible for the mind to ascend by climbing from one to another. If someone has in his mind climbed to the first Beatitude, by a sort of necessity of the logical sequence the next one awaits him, even if the saying at first seems rather odd.<sup>38</sup>

all of them [beatitudes] are connected with each other because they converge and merge towards a single goal.<sup>39</sup>

Ambrose writes:

Each Evangelist places this [sc. theirs is the kingdom of Heaven] as the first Beatitude. For it is the first in order, and both the author and generation of the virtues.<sup>40</sup>

Then, see the order... Some think that these are steps of virtues, whereby we may ascend from the lower to the highest.<sup>41</sup>

just as there are increases of virtues, there are also increases of rewards... why is the reward equal for the beginners and the perfect?... Thus, the first Kingdom of the Heavens was placed before the Saints in the release of the body; the second Kingdom of the Heavens is after the Resurrection, to be with Christ. When ye are in the Kingdom of the Heavens, then is a progress of mansions (cf. Ioh. 14: 2–3). Although there is One Kingdom, there are diverse merits in the Kingdom of the Heavens.<sup>42</sup>

38 Gregory of Nyssa, *De beat.* 2.1 (GNO 7/2.90): δοκεῖ μοι βαθμίδων δίκην ἢ τῶν μακαρισμῶν διακεῖσθαι τάξις, εὐεπίβατον τῷ λόγῳ δι' ἀλλήλων ποιούσα τὴν ἄνοδον. τὸν γὰρ τῷ πρώτῳ διὰ τῆς διανοίας ἐπιβεβηκότα μακαρισμῶ δι' ἀναγκαίας τινὸς τῆς τῶν νοημάτων ἀκολουθίας ὁ μετ' ἐκεῖνον ἐκδέχεται, καὶ ὑποξενίζειν δοκῆ παρὰ τὴν πρώτην ὁ λόγος.

39 *Ibid.*, 8.2 (GNO 7/2.163): ὅτι ἔχεται ἀλλήλων τὰ πάντα πρὸς τὸν ἕνα σκοπὸν συννευκότα τε καὶ συμπνέοντα.

40 Ambrose, *Exp. in Luc.* 5.50 (SC 45bis.200): "Primam benedictionem hanc uterque euangelista posuit. Ordine enim prima est et parens quaedam genratioque uirtutum."

41 *Ibid.*, 5.60 (SC 45bis. 204–205): "Vnde igitur ordinem... Hos quidam gradus uolunt esse uirtutum, per quos ab ultimis ad superiora possimus ascendere."

42 *Ibid.*, 5.61 (SC 45bis.205): "sicut incrementa uirtutum ita etiam incrementa sunt praemiorum... numquid aequale praemium incipientibus atque perfectis est?... Primum ergo regnum caelorum sanctis propositum est in absolute corpore, secundum regnum caelorum est post resurrectionem esse cum Christo. Cum fueris in regno caelorum,

Augustine writes:

The eighth stage returns, as it were, to the beginning . . . There are seven beatitudes, therefore, which lead to perfection, for the eighth, starting again from the outset as it were, adds clarity and shows what has been accomplished, so that through these gradations the others may reach completion.<sup>43</sup>

The one single reward for all these differently named stages, however, is the kingdom of heaven.<sup>44</sup>

Gregory and Ambrose describe the Matthean beatitudes as eight interconnected steps, whereas Augustine calls them the 'seven maxims'. Gregory and Ambrose do not develop a correspondence between the first and eighth beatitudes. It seems likely that they are less interested in expounding a theological argument than in moving the affections of their hearers and readers.<sup>45</sup> They share a common exegetical interest in the progressive steps of these beatitudes and in the ultimate goal of the ascension. Augustine seems to be in agreement with Gregory and Ambrose on these points.

### 3.6 *The Significance of the Number Eight*

Gregory of Nyssa writes:

I would say that it is as well first of all to pay attention in my discourse to the meaning of the mystery of the eighth day as it is set out in two hymns from the Psalter (Ps 6,1; 11/12,1), and of the purification and legislation about circumcision, both of which are observed on the eighth day (Lev 12,2–3; Gen 17,12). This number may perhaps have something to do with the eighth blessedness, which like a pinnacle of all the Beatitudes stands at the highest point of the good ascent. It is there that the prophet

---

tunc processus est mansionum. Etsi unum regnum, diuersa tamen merita sunt in regno caelorum."

43 Augustine, *Serm. Dom. mont.* 1.3.10 (NBA 10/2.90): "Octaua tamquam ad caput redit . . . Septem sunt ergo quae perficiunt; nam octaua clarificat et quod perfectum est demonstrat, ut per hos gradus perficiantur et ceteri, tamquam a capite rursus exordiens."

44 *Ibid.*, 1.4.12 (NBA 10/2.92): "Vnum autem praemium, quod est regnum caelorum pro ipsis gradibus uarie nominatum est."

45 On this point see Wilken, "*De beatitudinibus*, Oratio VIII," 244 and n.5; Piero Rollero, "L'influsso della «Expositio in Lucam» di Ambrogio nell'esegesi agostiniana", in *Augustinus Magister: Congrès international augustiniens*, vol. 1: *Communications*, CEASA, vol. 1 (Paris: Études Augustiniennes, 1954), 212–14.

points to the day of resurrection by the figure of the eighth day; the purification indicates the return of soiled humanity to its pure and natural state; the circumcision explains the discarding of dead skins, which we put on when we were stripped of life after our disobedience (cf. Gen. 3,21); and here the eighth blessing has the restoration to the heavens of those who once fell into bondage, but were then called back again from bondage to a kingdom.<sup>46</sup>

Ambrose writes:

Ye see that the whole sequence of the Old Law was an image of the future— . . . through the eighth day of the circumcision the future cleansing of all guilt at the Resurrection was prefigured by His age.<sup>47</sup>

Matthew revealed the mystic number in those eight. For many Psalms are written, 'For the eighth' (Ps. 6:1a; 11:1a), and ye receive the command, 'Give a portion to eight' (Eccl. 11:2), perhaps in those blessing; for just as the eighth is the perfection of our hope, so the eighth is the sum of the virtues.<sup>48</sup>

Augustine writes:

This eighth maxim, which returns to the beginning and evokes the image of the perfect man, is perhaps signified by the Old Testament practice

46 Gregory of Nyssa, *De beat.* 8.1 (GNO 7/2.161–62): ἐγὼ δὲ καλῶς ἔχειν φημί πρῶτον ἐκεῖνο κατανοῆσαι τῷ λόγῳ τί τὸ τῆς ὀγδόης παρὰ τῷ προφήτῃ μυστήριον τῆς ἐν δύο ψαλμῶδιαις προτεταγμένης, τί δὲ ὁ καθαρισμὸς καὶ τῆς περιτομῆς ἢ νομοθεσία, κατὰ τὴν ὀγδόην ἀμφοτέρα τῷ νόμῳ παρατηρούμενα. τάχα τι συγγενές ὁ ἀριθμὸς οὗτος πρὸς τὴν ὀγδόην ἔχει μακαριότητα, ἥτις ὡσπερ κορυφή τῶν μακαρισμῶν πάντων ἐπὶ τοῦ ἀκροτάτου κείται τῆς ἀγαθῆς ἀναβάσεως. ἐκεῖ τε γὰρ ὁ προφήτης τὴν ἀναστάσιμον ἡμέραν τῷ τῆς ὀγδόης αἰνίγματι διασημαίνει, καὶ ὁ καθαρισμὸς τὴν ἐπὶ τὸ καθαρὸν τε καὶ κατὰ φύσιν ἐπάνοδον τοῦ μολυνθέντος ἀνθρώπου ἐνδείκνυται, καὶ ἡ περιτομὴ τὴν τῶν νεκρῶν δερμάτων ἀποβολὴν ἐρμηνεύει, ἃ μετὰ τὴν παρακοὴν τῆς ζωῆς γυμνωθέντες ἐνεδυσάμεθα, καὶ ἐνταῦθα ἡ ὀγδοὴ μακαριότης τὴν εἰς τοὺς οὐρανοὺς ἀποκατάστασιν ἔχει τῶν εἰς δουλείαν μὲν ἐκπεσόντων, ἐπὶ βασιλείαν δὲ πάλιν ἐκ τῆς δουλείας ἀνακληθέντων.

47 Ambrose, *Exp. in Luc.* 2.56 (SC 45bis.97): "Vides omnem legis ueteris seriem fuisse typum futuri . . . eo per octauum circumcisionis diem culpae totius futura purgatio resurrectionis praefigurabatur aetate."

48 *Ibid.*, 5.49 (SC 45bis.201): "Ille in illis octo mysticum numerum reserauit. Pro octoua enim multi scribuntur psalmi, et mandatum accipis octo illis partem dare fortasse benedictionibus; sicut enim spei nostrae octaua perfectio est, ita octaua summa uirtutum est." See 6.80 (SC 45bis.258); 7.6 (SC 52bis.10–11); and 7.173 (SC 52bis.72–73). See also Rollero, *La «Expositio Evangelii secundum Lucam» di Ambrogio*, 28.

of circumcision on the eighth day and by the Lord's resurrection after the sabbath day, which is both the eighth and the first day, and by the celebration of eight days of rest which we mark in the rebirth of the new man, and by the very number of Pentecost.<sup>49</sup>

Considering the special significance of the number eight, the literary parallels between these texts are unquestionable—the reference to Genesis and Psalms texts; the relevance of the number eight to the perfection of the beatitudes. In spite of the close parallel, it is not necessary to determine that it was Gregory and/or Ambrose's explanations of the number that Augustine used. This is because there existed an arithmetical symbolism, based upon a belief widely recognised in the ancient world, that attributed to special numbers mysterious and symbolic meanings.<sup>50</sup> Thus, like Gregory and Ambrose, Augustine shares this exegetical tradition of the Catholic church.

The parallels I have examined between Augustine's interpretations of each beatitude and Gregory's and/or Ambrose's commentaries point to an extensive influence by the latter upon Augustine. I would in particular draw attention to his proximity to Gregory, which is closer than is generally acknowledged. How was such influence possible? What is the ground for supporting the premise that Augustine is influenced by Gregory? In this case, I suggest two channels apart from oral transmission that link the two exegetes: (1) some intermediary sources of such Latin authors as Ambrose, Victorinus of Poetovio, and Fortunatianus of Aquileia;<sup>51</sup> and (2) Augustine's direct approach to Gregory's *Homilies*. We know that Augustine's debt to Ambrose is generally accepted and that his exegesis of Matthew 7:6 (pearls before swine) in *De sermone Domini in monte* traces its interpretation back to the Origenian understanding of Victorinus of Poetovio and Fortunatianus of Aquileia. Thus, the first suggested channel will need further exploration of those exegetes. The second channel is partially confirmed by similarities I have already shown: the Holy Spirit as comfort, the allegorical interpretation of the Lord's food and water, and the explanation of the 'peacemaker', which as far as I can see, cannot be deduced from other possible sources. Moreover, it seems reasonable to suppose that

49 Augustine, *Serm. Dom. mont.* 1.4.12 (NBA 10/2.94): "Haec octaua sententia, quae ad caput redit perfectumque hominem declarat, significatur fortasse et circumcissione octauo die in Veteri Testamento, et Domini resurrectione post sabbatum, qui est utique octauus idemque primus dies, et celebratione octauarum feriarum quas in regeneratione noui hominis celebramus et numero ipso Pentecostes."

50 On this see e.g., Lierde, "The Teaching of St. Augustine," 36–38.

51 See Martine Dulaey, "L'apprentissage de l'exégèse biblique par Augustin (3): Années 393–394," *REAug* 51 (2005): 53–55.



Augustine never ceased developing his Greek. He probably knew enough to be able to read some Greek texts with the help of a glossary or outside assistance. We know that his exegesis of the Lord's Prayer (Matt 6:1–14) in *De sermone Domini in monte* shows his close dependence on Origen's explanation in *De beatitudinibus*. Thus, I put forward the possibility that Augustine's exegesis on the Matthean beatitudes directly depends upon the Gregorian exegesis, although further verification is needed.

#### 4 Beatitudes Linked with the Seven Gifts of the Spirit

Once he completed his affirmation of the ideal audience of the eight beatitudes enumerated above (*Serm. Dom. mont.* 1.3.10), Augustine proceeds to the second part of his commentary. He explains the beatitudes respectively by referring to the virtues, that is, humility, meekness, grief, hunger and thirst for justice, mercy, cleanness of heart, and wisdom. Then, the eight beatitudes (Matt 5:3–10) are reduced to seven.<sup>52</sup> Since the eighth beatitude reveals the perfection of human life, it signifies a return to the first beatitude, which also announces a certain fullness. Hence, Augustine constitutes the linkage between the Matthean beatitudes and the seven gifts of the Holy Spirit described in Isaiah 11:2–3. The significant correlation of Matthew's text with Isaiah is succinctly designed to elicit the distinction between the beatitudes and virtues explained in his interpretation.

Augustine's debt to the exegetical tradition with regard to both the order of the beatitudes and the significance of the number eight is clear. In his attempt to find some form of logical progression in the beatitudes, Augustine associates them with the gifts of the Holy Spirit listed in Isaiah. At this point, his interpretation is acknowledged as a creative endeavour. What then led him to connect the Matthean beatitudes to its gifts?

Augustine first interprets the eighth beatitude as the recapitulation of the first, as we have seen above.<sup>53</sup> He then turns to the sevenfold operation of the Holy Spirit enumerated in the texts of Isaiah 11:2–3. In dealing with the text, Augustine follows not the Vulgate translation of Jerome, but rather an old Latin version based on the Septuagint, which had been adopted as the authorised version in the ancient church.<sup>54</sup> He reads 'piety' for the fear of God

52 On this see Bright, "The Spirit"; and Lierde, "The Teaching of St. Augustine," 95, n.205.

53 See n.42.

54 On this see Naoki Kamimura, "Friendship and the Ascent of the Soul in Augustine," in *Prayer and Spirituality in the Early Church*, vol. 4: *The Spiritual Life*, ed. Wendy Mayer, Pauline Allen, and Lawrence Cross (Sydney: St Pauls Publications, 2006), 305, n.48.

in its first occurrence, listing seven gifts of the Holy Spirit. His declaration of the linkage between the beatitudes and the divine gifts is thus explained as follows:

And in my opinion the sevenfold working of the Holy Spirits, of which Isaiah speaks, corresponds to these stages and maxims. But the order is different. For in Isaiah the list begins with what is more excellent, whereas here we start with what is less so. The prophet begins with wisdom and concludes with the fear of God, but 'the beginning of wisdom is the fear of God' (Sir 1:16; Ps 111:10). Therefore, if we ascend by stages and in numerical order, as it were, the first stage is the fear of God, the second piety, the third knowledge, the fourth fortitude, the fifth counsel, the sixth understanding, and the seventh wisdom.<sup>55</sup>

The gifts of the Holy Spirit are signified as steps descending from wisdom, and the text of Matthew signifies the steps ascending from the fear of God. The former process was carried out by the prophet Isaiah, and the latter is set out for those who aim for the perfection of human life.

All of these can certainly be accomplished in this present life, just as we believe that they were accomplished in the life of the apostles.<sup>56</sup>

From the text of Sirach 1:16, Augustine sees the beginning of its ascending steps. Thus, by following the precept of Isaiah, not only "his assembled audience" of the Sermon on the Mount, but also "those who were not present" and "those of later" are admonished by Augustine to ascend the sevenfold spiritual stages.

I suggest that the exegesis that leads Augustine to connect the Matthean beatitudes to the gifts of the Holy Spirit lay in his concern for the idea of order. Augustine seems to focus on the twofold order in the text of Matthew: (1) the internal structure of the individual beatitudes; and (2) the sequence and order of the beatitudes. His exegesis of the former aspect makes clear the correlation

---

55 Augustine, *Serm. Dom. mont.* 1.4.11 (NBA 10/2.92): "Videtur ergo mihi etiam septiformis operatio Spiritus Sancti, de qua Isaias loquitur, his gradibus sententiisque congruere. Sed interest ordinis: nam ibi enumeratio ab excellentioribus coepit, hic uero ab inferioribus; ibi namque incipit a sapientia et desinit ad timorem Dei, sed *initium sapientiae timor Dei* est. Quapropter si gradatim tamquam ascendentes numeremus, primus ibi est timor Dei, secunda pietas, tertia scientia, quarta fortitudo, quintum consilium, sextus intellectus, septima sapientia."

56 *Ibid.*, 1.4.12 (NBA 10/2.94): "Et ista quidem in hac uita compleri possunt, sicut completa esse in apostolis credimus."

between the beatitudes and the virtues, and that the beatitudes are counsels for a virtuous life. It offers the audience the possibility of following those moral precepts. His exegesis of the latter aspect secures the future direction of those who wish to live according to the precept. It offers the audience the possibility of attaining the ultimate end of human beings. Augustine's understanding of the Matthean beatitudes connected with the seven gifts of the Holy Spirit seems to be inspired by the text of Sirach 1:16. There is, of course, his professed reason that he regards the prophet Isaiah (and the apostles) as having the permanent vision of God in this life, although the gifts are necessary to attain the perfection of life. However, there may be another explanation, namely that the Sirach text allows him to reverse the order of the gifts of the text of Isaiah and provides the audience an indispensable starting point for the ascending steps.

Why does Augustine refer to the text of Sirach? There might be two possible indications of the influence of Ambrose and Hilary's interpretation of Sirach 1:16 (= Ps 110:10) upon Augustine.<sup>57</sup> In his *Expositio Psalmi 118*, Ambrose discusses the significance of 'fear', commenting on Psalm 118:38. After defining the fear as the pedestal of the Word, he refers to Ps 110:10 (Sirach 1:16).<sup>58</sup> So too, Hilary's commentary on Psalm 118:38 contains explicit reference to Psalm 110:10.<sup>59</sup> Both Ambrose and Hilary interpret the 'beginning' of wisdom with reference to the text of Isaiah 11. Ambrose's text seems to follow that of Hilary with regard to his understanding of the 'beginning'. Because they explain the reason why the rest of the gifts are placed before the 'fear of God' in Isaiah 11, the fear of God lays the foundation for the precedents. The 'beginning' signifies its prominence in the arrangement of the gifts. Hence, assuming that Ambrose's and Hilary's interpretations of the beginning of wisdom correspond with Isaiah's gifts, no other evidence has surfaced that would support the idea that Augustine's exegesis of the reverse of the order in the sevenfold gifts of the Spirit traces back to the exegetical tradition.

## 5 Conclusion

The examination of the parallels between Augustine's *De sermone Domini in monte* and the interpretations of some exegetes has confirmed that the hermeneutic legacy lies behind his understanding of the Matthean beatitudes. Augustine's adherence to the exegetical tradition throws into relief his imagina-

57 On this in particular see Rollero, *La «Expositio Evangelii secundum Lucam» di Ambrogio*, 24 and 29–33.

58 Ambrose, *Exp. Ps. 118* 5:39 (SAEMO 9.232).

59 Hilary, *Tract. in Ps. 118* 5:16 (CCL 61A.57).

tive approach to the linkage between the Matthean beatitudes and the seven-fold gifts of the Spirit. What then is the significance of his understanding of the Matthean beatitudes? There is, indeed, his concern for the text of Sirach which leads him to undertake his crucial steps. However, I would see his opening declaration in *De sermone Domini in monte* as indicative.

If anyone were to ponder with piety and seriousness the sermon which our Lord Jesus Christ gave on the mount, I believe that he would discover there, as far as norms for high moral living are concerned, the perfect way to lead the Christian life. We would not be rash enough to make this promise of ourselves, but we deduce it from the very words of that same Lord. Indeed, from the conclusion of the sermon it is evident that all the precepts necessary for regulating a person's life are contained in it... the words he spoke on the mount serve as such a perfect template of instruction for those people who wish to model their lives on them... What I have said is intended to show that this sermon embodies the perfect summary of all those precepts necessary for leading the Christian life.<sup>60</sup>

Here Augustine seems to consider the Matthean beatitudes to be primarily ethical in character, and in this interpretation agrees with Ambrose's virtue-centred argumentation in his *Expositions*. They set out the entrance requirements for the virtuous life.

However, one problem remains: why does Augustine come to repeat the interpretation of the Sermon on the Mount? What does its repetition mean to the reader of the text? My tentative suggestion is that Augustine intends to show the gradual changes in the viewpoint he adopts: (1) the first part of his exegesis (1.1.3–1.2.9) would be the general descriptions of the beatitudes where his debt to the exegetical tradition is much clearer than that in the latter parts; (2) the second part (1.3.10–1.4.11) offers the gradual ascension of the soul by integrating the beatitudes with the corresponding virtues by which

---

60 Augustine, *Serm. Dom. mont.* 1.1.1 (NBA 10/2.82): "Sermonem quem locutus est Dominus noster Iesus Christus in monte, sicut in Euangelio secundum Matthaem legimus, si quis pie sobrieque considerauerit, puto quod inueniet in eo, quantum ad mores optimos pertinent, perfectum uitae christianae modum. Quod polliceri non temere audemus sed ex ipsis eiusdem Domini uerbis conicientes; nam sic ipse sermo concluditur, ut appareat in eo praecepta esse omnia quae ad informandam uitam pertinent... significauit haec uerba quae in monte locutus est tam perfecte instruere uitam eorum qui uoluerint secundum ea uiuere... Hoc dixi, ut appareat istum sermonem omnibus praeceptis quibus christiana uita informatur esse perfectum."

one deserves the individual beatitudes; and (3) the last part within the ascending paradigm (1.4.11–12) extends the explanation to link it with the gifts of the Holy Spirit. The consequence is the inseparable connection between the virtue, the beatitude, and the gifts. The tripartite division of his exegesis has played a key part in appealing to the gifts of the Holy Spirit as the primary source of human perfection:

by whom [Holy Spirit] we are led into the kingdom of heaven and by whose doing, thanks to whom we receive our inheritance, we are consoled and fed, obtain mercy, are purified and restored to peace. And so, having attained perfection, we endure for the sake of truth and righteousness all those external trials which come our way.<sup>61</sup>

Hence, I assume two significant and mutually consistent themes in Augustine's exegesis. The rhetorical device clearly declares his commitment to members of the church community. And this member-oriented explanation has coherent eschatological characteristics because not only does he intend to show the future perfection by the Holy Spirit, but he also intends to include all future members of his audience. Although we can easily see the ethical aspect of his understanding, the eschatological discourse is also delivered to the reader of *De sermone Domini in monte*. Its evaluation precisely corresponds to the circumstances in which Augustine launched his exegetical career. He was surrounded by a congregation who expected him to offer them guidance for their daily life. Following their expectation, it is logical that Augustine would first synthesise the exegesis of the Sermon on the Mount. Furthermore, he directed the members of his community towards the nature and demands of God's sovereignty. Augustine's exegesis of the Matthean beatitudes was to ensure a response to questions of personal and social occupation.

### Bibliography

Ambrose. *Expositio euangelii secundum Lucam* (Gabriel Tissot, ed., *Ambroise de Milan: L'Évangile de s. Luc*, SC, vols 45bis and 52bis, 2nd ed. Paris: Éditions du Cerf, 1971–1976. English translation in Theodosia Tomkinson, *Exposition of the Holy Gospel*

---

61 Ibid., 1.4.12 (NBA 10/2.94): “quo in regnum caelorum ducimur et haereditatem accipimus et consolamur et pascimur et misericordiam consequimur et mundamur et pacificamur. Atque ita perfecti omnes extrinsecus illatas molestias pro ueritate et iustitia sustinemus.”

- according to Saint Luke: Saint Ambrose of Milan, 2nd ed. Etna, Calif.: Center for Traditionalist Orthodox Studies, 2003.).
- . *Expositio Psalmi n8* (Luigi Franco Pizzolato, ed., *Sant' Ambrogio: Opera exegetiche*, vol. 8/1: *Commento al Salmo CXVIII*, SAEMO, vol. 9. Milan: Biblioteca Ambrosiana, 1987).
- Augustine. *De sermone Domini in monte* (Almut Mutzenbecher, ed., *Sancti Aurelii Augustini: De sermone Domini in monte libros duos*, CCL, vol. 35. Turnhout: Brepols, 1967).
- . *Opera* (*Opere di Sant'Agostino*, Nuova Biblioteca Agostiniana, 44 vols. Rome: Città Nuova Editrice, 1965–2007).
- Gregory of Nyssa. *Gregorii Nysseni Opera*, 10 vols. Leiden: Brill, 1972–2009.
- Hilary of Poitiers. In *Psalmum n8* (Jean Doignon and Roland Demeulenaere, eds, *Tractatus super Psalmos II*, CCL, vol. 61A. Turnhout: Brepols, 2002).
- Origen. *Fragmenta in Matthaëum* (Erich Klostermann and Ernest Benz, eds, *Origenes Werke*, vol. 12: *Commentarius in Matthaëum III/1*, GCS, vol. 41/1. Leipzig: J.C. Hinrichs, 1941).
- Allison, Jr, Dale C. "The Structure of the Sermon on the Mount." *JBL* 106 (1987): 423–45.
- Altaner, Berthold. "Augustinus und Gregor von Nazianz, Gregor von Nyssa." In *Kleine Patristische Schriften*, edited by Günther Glockman, TU, Bd 83, 277–85. Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 1967.
- Bassi, Domenico. "Le beatitudini nella struttura del «De sermone Domini in monte» e nelle altre opere di s. Agostino." In *Miscellanea Agostiniana*, vol. 2: *Studi Agostiniani*, 915–31. Rome: Tipografia Poliglotta Vaticana, 1931.
- De Bruyne, Donatien. "Saint Augustin reviseur de la Bible." In *Miscellanea Agostiniana*, vol. 2: *Studi Agostiniani*, 521–606. Rome: Tipografia Poliglotta Vaticana, 1931.
- Bright, Pamela. "The Spirit in the Sevenfold Pattern of the Spiritual Life in the Thought of St Augustine." In *Studia Patristica*, vol. 43, edited by Frances Young, M. J. Edwards, and P. M. Parvis, papers presented at the 14th International Conference on Patristic Studies, Oxford 2003, 25–31. Leuven: Peeters, 2006.
- Campbell, Michael G., Kim Paffenroth, and Roland Teske, trans. *New Testament I and II*, WSA, 1/15 and 16. Hyde Park, N.Y.: New City Press, 2014.
- Coppa, Giovanni. "Introduzione." In *Sant' Ambrogio. Opera exegetiche*, vol. 9/1: *Esposizione del vangelo secondo Luca*, SAEMO, vol. 11, 9–63. Milan: Biblioteca Ambrosiana, 1978.
- Decret, François. "Le problème du Saint Esprit dans le système manichéen." In *Studia Patristica*, vol. 27, edited by Elizabeth A. Livingstone, papers presented at the 11th International Conference on Patristic Studies, Oxford 1991, 267–73. Leuven: Peeters, 1993.
- Dobell, Brian, *Augustine's Intellectual Conversion: The Journey from Platonism to Christianity*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009.

- Dulaey, Martine. "L'apprentissage de l'exégèse biblique par Augustin (3): Années 393–394." *REAug* 51 (2005): 21–65.
- Van Fleteren, Frederick. "Sermone domini in monte, De." In *Augustine through the Ages: An Encyclopedia*, edited by Allan D. Fitzgerald, 771–72. Grand Rapids, Mich.: W.B. Eerdmans, 1999.
- Gentili, D. "Introduzione." In *Il discorse della montagna*, Piccola biblioteca agostiniana, vol. 15, 5–16. Rome: Città Nuova, 1991.
- Hall, Stuart George. "Gregory of Nyssa, *On the Beatitudes*: An Introduction to the Text and Translation." In *Gregory of Nyssa: Homilies on the Beatitudes. An English Version with Commentary and Supporting Studies. Proceedings of the Eighth International Colloquium on Gregory of Nyssa (Paderborn, 14–18 September 1998)*, edited by Hubertus R. Drobner and Albert Viciano, VCSupp, vol. 52, 3–19. Leiden: Brill, 2000.
- Harrington, Daniel J. *The Gospel of Matthew*, Sacra Pagina, vol. 1. Collegeville, Minn.: Liturgical Press, 1991.
- Holl, Adolf. *Augustins Bergpredigtexegese nach seinem Frühwerk "De Sermone Domini in monte libri duo"*. Wien: Herder, 1960.
- Kamimura, Naoki. "Friendship and the Ascent of the Soul in Augustine." In *Prayer and Spirituality in the Early Church*, vol. 4: *The Spiritual Life*, edited by Wendy Mayer, Pauline Allen, and Lawrence Cross, 295–310. Sydney: St Pauls Publications, 2006.
- Kannengiesser, Charles. *Handbook of Patristic Exegesis: The Bible of Ancient Christianity*, 2 vols. Leiden: Brill, 2004.
- Lancel, Serge. *Saint Augustine*. Translated by Antonia Nevill. London: SCM Press, 2002.
- Van Lierde, Canisius. "The Teaching of St. Augustine on the Gifts of the Holy Spirit from the Text of Isaiah 11:2–3." In *Collectanea Augustiniana. Augustine: Mystic and Mystagogue*, edited by Frederik van Fleteren, Joseph C. Schnaubelt, and Joseph Reino, 5–110. New York: Peter Lang, 1994.
- Markus, Robert A. "Augustine's Pauline Legacies." In *Paul and the Legacies of Paul*, edited by William S. Babcock, 221–25. Dallas: Southern Methodist University Press, 1990.
- Meredith, Anthony. "Gregory of Nyssa: *De beatitudinibus*, Oratio 1: 'Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven' (Mt 5,3)." In *Gregory of Nyssa: Homilies on the Beatitudes. An English Version with Commentary and Supporting Studies. Proceedings of the Eighth International Colloquium on Gregory of Nyssa (Paderborn, 14–18 September 1998)*, edited by Hubertus R. Drobner and Albert Viciano, VCSupp, vol. 52, 93–109. Leiden: Brill, 2000.
- Mizzi, Jos. "The Latin Text of Matt. v–viii in St. Augustine's *De sermone domini in monte*." *Augustiniana* 4 (1954): 450–94.
- O'Donnell, James J. *Augustine: Confessions*, 3 vols. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1992.
- Patte, Daniel and Eugene TeSelle, eds. *Engaging Augustine on Romans: Self, Context, and Theology in Interpretation*. Harrisburg, Pa: Trinity Press, 2002.



- Plumer, Eric, *Augustine's Commentary on Galatians: Introduction, Text, Translation, and Notes*, OECs. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003.
- Ramsey, Boniface, "Introduction." In Michael G. Campbell, Kim Paffenroth, and Roland Teske, trans. *New Testament I and II*, WSA, 1/15 and 16, 11–16. Hyde Park, NY: New City Press, 2014.
- Rollero, Piero. "L'influsso della «Expositio in Lucam» di Ambrogio nell'esegesi agostiniana." In *Augustinus Magister: Congrès international augustinien*, vol. 1: *Communications*, CEASA, vol. 1, 211–20. Paris: Études Augustiniennes, 1954.
- . *La «Expositio Evangelii secundum Lucam» di Ambrogio come fonte della esegesi agostiniana*. Turin: Università di Torino, 1958.
- Tschang, In-San Bernhard. "Octo Beatitudines. Die acht Seligpreisungen als Stufenleiter der Seele bei Ambrosius." PhD diss., University of Bonn, 1986.
- Wilken, Robert Louis. "De beatitudinibus, Oratio VIII: 'Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven' (Mt 5,10)." In *Gregory of Nyssa: Homilies on the Beatitudes. An English Version with Commentary and Supporting Studies. Proceedings of the Eighth International Colloquium on Gregory of Nyssa (Paderborn, 14–18 September 1998)*, edited by Hubertus R. Drobner and Albert Viciano, VCSupp, vol. 52, 243–54. Leiden: Brill, 2000.
- Zum Brunn, Émilie. *Le dilemme de l'être et du néant chez Saint Augustin: des premiers dialogues aux «Confessions»*, Bochumer Studien zur Philosophie, vol. 4, 2nd ed. Amsterdam: B.R. Grüner, 1984.



## Shaping the Poor: The Philosophical Anthropology of Augustine in the Context of the Era of Crisis

*Kazuhiko Demura*

Poverty in the Roman empire has attracted much attention. A useful introduction to the previous work on Roman poverty has been provided by Robin Osborne,<sup>1</sup> who focuses on the question of the visibility of poverty itself and discusses whether the change from invisible poverty to visible can be traced as far back as the early Rome empire or whether this phenomenon emerged slowly after Constantine among the Christian world. The dating of this change is very difficult to determine; however, it has significant implications for scholars' image of the society. Peter Brown in his *Poverty and Leadership in the Later Roman Empire*, referring to Evelyne Patlagean's research, launches his discussion on poverty and Christian bishops' leadership as follows:

Patlagean's later Roman empire was not simply a society that had become 'Christianized'. It was a society where the gulf between rich and poor had, at last, been starkly demystified: 'poverty [she wrote] could [now] be seen in its full economic nakedness, stripped of the civic veil with which Rome had screened its reality.'<sup>2</sup>

And here, for Brown, Christian bishops intervened as 'the lovers of the poor' and through their leadership, therefore, as 'the governors of the poor' they succeeded in establishing a social system for them, in association with the emperors' hegemony over the empire in the East. They discovered the poor in the background of the vast gulf between the rich and the poor, emperor and subjects. In this context, Brown even says, "to put it bluntly: in a sense, it was the Christian bishops who invented the poor. They rose to leadership in late

---

1 Robin Osborne, "Roman Poverty in Context," in *Poverty in the Roman World*, ed. Margaret Atkins and Robin Osborne (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 2–11.

2 Peter Brown, *Poverty and Leadership in the Later Roman Empire*, The Menahem Stern Jerusalem Lectures (Hanover, N.H. and London: University Press of New England, 2002), 8.

Roman society by bringing the poor into ever sharper focus.”<sup>3</sup> On the other hand, there are studies demonstrating that the invention of the visibility of the poor should not be overestimated. Richard Finn points out that the Christian image of the poor does not always reflect the reality.<sup>4</sup>

Among plenty of studies on this topic, Pauline Allen, Bronwen Neil, and Wendy Mayer in *Preaching Poverty in Late Antiquity: Perceptions and Realities*, which focuses on the rhetoric of late antique bishops like John Chrysostom, Augustine, and Leo I of Rome, concludes that the rhetoric of these bishops with regard to poverty and the poor fails to provide us with a clear picture of poor people in late antiquity or with evidence of episcopal attempts to change the *status quo*.<sup>5</sup> Their wide-ranging survey is well documented and very illuminating. I owe much to their studies. This is especially so in the chapter about Augustine on poverty, where Pauline Allen and Edward Morgan suggest that Augustine’s concern with poverty underlay a broader set of theological and social concerns rather than being paramount in his thought, and emphasise that he was not the lover of the poor nor the governor of the poor, and conclude:

Augustine deployed rhetoric for the purposes of anthropological metaphor . . . Augustine’s treatment of poverty concentrates on psychological reconfiguration assisted by rhetorical re-articulation of social and communal identity.<sup>6</sup>

Rhetoric works to build people’s moral motivation on the basis of self-interest concerning pleasure and pain. Utilitarian discourse must be persuasive. But according to Augustine’s insight into human motivations, the psychology of the sheer self-interest of the congregations must be re-configured into a human condition based upon the true motivation of love for God. In this context of a broader anthropological viewpoint, Augustine put the rich and the poor side-by-side and inclusively as human beings.

In this chapter I shall consider: (1) what the reality was for Augustine; (2) how the reading and preaching of the Psalms function; and (3) the role the

---

3 Ibid., 8–9.

4 Richard Finn, “Portraying the Poor: Descriptions of Poverty in Christian Texts from the Late Roman Empire,” in Atkins and Osborne, *Poverty in the Roman World*, 130–31.

5 Bronwen Neil, “Conclusions,” in Pauline Allen, Bronwen Neil, and Wendy Mayer, *Preaching Poverty in Late Antiquity: Perceptions and Realities*, AKTG, Bd 28 (Leipzig: Evangelische Verlagsanstalt, 2009), 228.

6 Pauline Allen and Edward Morgan, “Augustine on Poverty,” in Allen, Neil, and Mayer, *Preaching Poverty in Late Antiquity*, 164.

metaphor of a traveller plays in *De doctrina Christiana*. Through these considerations I shall show that Augustine established a unique Latin-text community embedded in his library and the poor are formulated in his text; that the language of the Psalms together with Paul's understanding had a special function for him; and that the treatment of the commandment of the love of God and love of neighbour in *De doctrina Christiana* is at the core of his anthropology. I would like to shed a new light on Augustine's efforts to establish a unique Christian identity of human beings.

## 1 Facing the Reality

In Possidius' *Vita Augustini* we find no portrait of the Augustine who devoted himself to concrete activities of charity. "Personal care of the poor formed no part of Augustine's recorded public persona."<sup>7</sup> This does not necessarily mean that he had no contact with poverty in the world that surrounded him, nor that he was indifferent to needy people.

As Allen and Morgan also point out, "the Divjak letters contain important information . . . one of them is also our first western witness for the existence of the poor-roll of a church (*Ep.20\**)."<sup>8</sup> This newly discovered letter reveals an interesting fact. Peter Brown mentioned *Epistula 20\** of Augustine to Fabiola concerning the case of Antoninus:

Young Antoninus, future disastrous bishop of Fussala, had come to Hippo with his mother and his mother's lover. The family lived for a time on the alms of the church. Then Augustine intervened to regulate the situation. Antoninus and his 'step-father' were given places in the monastery. His mother was put on the *matricula*, the formal list of the 'poor of the church'.<sup>9</sup>

With regard to this poor-roll (*matricula pauperum*), Richard Finn considers that,

this might possibly suggest that only women could be listed in this way at Hippo, even though episcopal alms reached a wider group including the

7 *Ibid.*, 153, n.250.

8 *Ibid.*, 124.

9 Brown, *Poverty and Leadership*, 64–65.

local monks, but it seems more likely that Augustine had an eye to the available accommodation, and to the boy's education.

Finn also points out that,

instances of the word *matricula* itself are extremely rare in this period, but Augustine did not have to explain himself to Fabiola [the recipient of *Ep.* 20\*] when recounting Antoninus' troubled history, and we may reasonably suppose that a similar list was known to her in Rome.<sup>10</sup>

Brown adds one case of the founding of a hospital (*xenodochium*) by Augustine's presbyteral colleague Leporius and explains that, "a large number were formally enrolled on various 'poor lists': 3000 were on the list of widows and orphans in fourth-century Antioch, 7,500 were on the poor rolls of the church of Alexandria in the seventh century."<sup>11</sup>

Brown seems to want to convey to his readers the impression that the institutional treatment of the poor had been established both in the eastern and western churches, and that the leadership of bishops was important in producing this universal trend in late antiquity. But Augustine's case has a special context. Augustine discovered that Antoninus' real father was still living and that his mother, after separating from her husband, had united herself to this other man. So Augustine's real effort was to rectify their lives. He persuaded both the step-father and the boy to embrace continence. And so it came about that the man went with the boy to the monastery. As a result, the mother who was not divorced had to live independently. Coming onto the rolls of the poor supported by the church is like a special rescue shelter for such women involved in complicated difficulties. We need to be cautious and read the text in context.

Even if poverty came to be visible, what does it mean that Augustine's main concern did not lie there? It may be useful to compare this understanding with what Brown observes in the eastern Roman empire:

It was in these days that the leaders of the Christian church had come, by the middle of the fifth century, to create a new language of solidarity. It was a language appropriate to a relatively new social and political situation within the Eastern Roman empire. We should not underestimate the extraordinary degree of homogeneity achieved, in the fifth and sixth

10 Richard Finn, *Almsgiving in the Later Roman Empire: Christian Promotion and Practice (313–450)*, OCM (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), 75.

11 Brown, *Poverty and Leadership*, 65.

centuries, by the centralized structures of the Eastern Roman empire. All roads now led to Constantinople, as New Rome, in a manner that they had led to Rome at an earlier period.<sup>12</sup>

It is true that other westerners like Ambrose had a keen contact with eastern Christianity and that Jerome and Pelagius moved to the eastern world, so in a sense all roads led to Constantinople already. The spread of asceticism and the monastic life in western society may be a sign of unity between East and West in late antiquity. An interesting case is that of John Cassian, a contemporary of Augustine, born in western Europe in about 365, who had lived the monastic life in Bethlehem and in Egypt for a long time, and who founded a monastery in Marseille. We may find some extended coherence of the eastern world in this regard.

But Augustine's movement did not have such a scope. He was born in North Africa, studied in Carthage, secured a job teaching rhetoric in Rome, and then got an appointment as professor in Milan where the emperor resided. Under the influence of Bishop Ambrose, he finally converted to Christianity in 386. On retiring from his career, he made the decision to return home to Africa where he started his new life as *seruus Dei*. He was unexpectedly made priest in 391, then elevated to bishop of Hippo in 395/6. The bishop of Hippo never went across the sea again. He only visited neighbouring churches in Africa and sojourned several times in Carthage.<sup>13</sup> On his way home he must have seen monasteries in Milan and Rome, but he was not involved with them. He lived with his colleagues in an episcopal house-'monastery', but his life style was totally different from the eastern monks. It is paradoxical that John Cassian, who had a different understanding from Augustine concerning divine grace and human perfection because of his background in eastern asceticism, did have a strong influence on Benedict of Nursia, who established the leading tradition of western monasticism. Augustinian tradition, so-called Augustinianism, was not the main stream of western monastic identity.

Anyway, day and night Augustine wrote books and treatises, delivered sermons to his congregations, and diligently responded to letters. He used the letter correspondence effectively. His best friend Alypius, bishop of Thagaste, was a liaison to the imperial court at Ravenna. His correspondence with Jerome, Paulinus of Nola, Flavius Marcellinus, and the bishops of Rome is worth studying. His list of correspondents shows the spread of his world. Together with

<sup>12</sup> Ibid., 96–97.

<sup>13</sup> See Othmar Perler and Jean-Louis Maier, *Les voyages de saint Augustin*, CEASA, vol. 36 (Paris: Études augustiniennes, 1969).

attending the North African episcopal synod and presiding at the episcopal hearings in Hippo, writing activities were all he committed to. It is all the more remarkable that in the later days of his life it was his intention to edit his entire writings, on which he exerted considerable effort. Our picture of Augustine has always come from his corpus of writings. As James O'Donnell suggests, the Augustine we see is always the Augustine who would like to be seen by Augustine himself.<sup>14</sup> We are not certain whether Augustine intentionally preserved *Epistula 20\** or it only coincidentally survived, but his concrete treatment of the destitute people in this letter betrays his chief concern with regard to the poor.

Augustine invented a unique world by his own initiative; it is a world of texts. He lived not merely in the western Roman empire but in a world that was to survive after the fall of the empire. It is well known that Augustine edited all his works with a brief comment (*Retractationes*) in his last days in 427. He prepared editions of all his letters and sermons, but they were uncompleted, stranded by annoying refutations he had to undertake against Julian of Eclanum and by his death in 430 at the age of 76. His colleague Possidius, bishop of Calama, who is the author of *Vita Augustini*, wrote a catalogue (*Indiculum*) of Augustine's books, letters, treatises, and sermons as an appendix to the *uita*.

While the identity of the western empire had almost disappeared as a result of the impact of the Goths and Vandals, the identity of Augustine's works still remained in the libraries of the western world. Augustine's efforts towards a "rhetorical re-articulation of social and communal identity"<sup>15</sup> were safely integrated into his entire output, including his letters and sermons, and he made every effort to preserve and transfer them to the next generations in the Latin world. He was able to shape the new identity through his works.<sup>16</sup>

## 2 The Function of the Psalms

Another coincidence Brown suggested is nonetheless significant for considering Augustine's unique identity. He says:

Coinciding with this development, the penetration of late Roman society by the religious language of Christianity, especially by the language of

14 James J. O'Donnell, *Augustine: A New Biography* (New York: HarperCollins, 2005), 37.

15 Allen and Morgan, "Augustine on Poverty," 164.

16 See Kazuhiko Demura, "Reception of Augustine," in *The Wiley Blackwell Companion to Patristics*, ed. Ken Parry (Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell).

the Psalms, tinged the relationship between rulers and subjects, just as it had tinged the relations between the rich and the poor, with a sense of the need to bridge great distances, distances that somehow echoed the gulf that exist between God and man. From the emperor, now wrapped in majesty and believed to reign by ‘the grace of God’ alone, downward, the spread of monotheism in late Roman society had the effect of bringing a sharper, more melodramatic note to the problems associated with the symbolic expression of cohesion in a Christian society.<sup>17</sup>

According to Brown, the image of a mighty act of *synkatabasis* (‘condescension’) on the part of God could also act as a symbol of the ideal cohesion of society.

Widely separated segments of society—emperor and subjects, rich and poor—were bound together by mysterious ties of common flesh and common belief. Those at the top should learn to respect these ties and ‘condescend’ to listen to those at the bottom.<sup>18</sup>

Under the image of the reign of God, the emperor and the bishops worked from above downwards. Accepting that Brown’s picture for eastern society is correct, Augustine’s understanding of society and of bishops’ commitment, however, is different.

The poor people (עניים) have the right to claim justice from God in heaven and from the kings or leaders in the world. The psalmist is the voice of the people’s claim for justice and mercy. Brown’s picture of Christian acceptance of the language of Psalms in the late Roman empire is tinged indeed by this image of the poor. In contrast, according to Augustine’s acceptance of Psalms, he heard in them the voice of Christ and the voice of the body of Christ whose head is Christ himself.<sup>19</sup>

What influence did his reading of Psalms have on Augustine? Richard Finn deals with Augustine’s expositions of Psalms and their relationship to almsgiving. He suggests that Augustine’s earlier expositions of Psalms 1–32, written in 391 just after he became a priest in Hippo, contain only ambiguous promotion of almsgiving, in contrast with the next expositions (33–98), written when he was bishop, which contain a greater or lesser degree of direct or indirect

17 Brown, *Poverty and Leadership*, 97.

18 *Ibid.*, 97.

19 Michael Fiedrowicz, “Introduction,” in Mary Boulding, trans., *Saint Augustine: Expositions of the Psalms*, vol. 1, WSA, 3/15 (Hyde Park, N.Y.: New City Press, 2000), 13–66.

promotion of almsgiving.<sup>20</sup> It is true the promotion of almsgiving is an intimate topic for a bishop to preach on, and in, order to persuade the congregations, rhetoric should be used effectively. The success of rhetorical persuasion mostly depends on the ability to rouse the emotions of the hearers and to lead them to wherever the speaker wants to bring them. Rhetoric is a *psychagogia*; it is a persuading to produce conviction in the soul of the hearers, not a teaching to convey knowledge in a strict sense.<sup>21</sup>

As Finn argues, Augustine places the poor and the rich equally and side by side before God, encouraging his hearers to give alms. Augustine's chief concern may be to shape the inner disposition of the almsgivers. But is it enough for Augustine to encourage the congregation to give alms generously? For the juxtaposition of the rich and the poor, Augustine had come to presuppose that all human beings are receivers from God indiscriminately. Relying upon the apostle's thought in 1 Corinthians 4:7 ("Who confers any distinction on you? Name something you have that you have not received. If, then, you have received it why are you boasting as if it were your own?"), Augustine consciously cited this Pauline phrase when he wrote *De spiritu et littera* for Marcellinus in answer to some Pelagian questions in 412. But just after he became a bishop in 396, he emphasised the human phase of receiving. Augustine said that, "for those who make generous use of what they have received he [God] will complete what he has given, and heap even more upon them."<sup>22</sup>

For the Lord himself is the wealth of the poor. This is why their houses are empty, so that their hearts may be full of riches. Let the wealthy strive to fill their treasure chests, but the poor look for what can fill their hearts; and when their hearts are full they who seek the Lord praise him.<sup>23</sup>

It is noteworthy that Augustine's interpretation of the human heart (*cor*) in *Enarrationes in Psalmos* changed from *Expositiones* 1–32 to the later ones. The

20 Finn, "Portraying the Poor," 133.

21 See Plato, *Phdr.* 261a; and idem, *Grg.* 453a. Cf. Aristotle, *Ars rhetorica*, 1.1.

22 Augustine, *De doct. chr.* 1.1.1 (NBA 8.12): "cum benignitate utentibus eo quod acceperunt, adimplebit atque cumulabit quod dedit." English translation in Edmund Hill, *Saint Augustine: Teaching Christianity* (De doctrina Christiana), WSA, 1/11 (Hyde Park, N.Y.: New City Press, 1996).

23 Augustine, *En. Ps.* 21.2.27 (NBA 25.302): "Dominus est diuitiae pauperum; ideo inanis est domus, ut cor plenum diuitiis sit. Diuites quaerant unde arcam impleant; pauperes quaerunt unde cor impleant; et cum impleuerint, laudant Dominum qui requirunt eum." English translation in Maria Boulding, *Saint Augustine: Expositiones of the Psalms*, 6 vols, WSA, 3/15–20 (Hyde Park, N.Y.: New City Press, 2000–2004).



change was from a highly spiritual understanding to a more communal understanding.<sup>24</sup> It is no coincidence that when he became a bishop he wrote *De doctrina Christiana* (396) and *Confessiones* (397–401). He came to understand the common basis of human beings. Through this insight on the human heart and *affectus*, Augustine was able to relativise the rich and the poor and he tried to overcome the gap between them. Augustine did not insist on the one-sided downward direction from the emperor to his subjects, bishops to the congregations, monks to lay persons, and from the rich to the poor, but rather paid attention to a bottom-up establishment of human society (*ciuitas*).

### 3 The Philosophical Anthropology of *De doctrina Christiana*

*De doctrina Christiana* is Augustine's instruction on how to preach effectively to congregations, but in order to do this, preachers will have to find a way to discover what needs to be understood. He began this task as "a great and arduous work" (*magnum opus et arduum*). This is the same expression we find in the preface of *De ciuitate Dei*. *De doctrina Christiana* shows the two ways of treating the scriptures: "a way to discover what needs to be understood, and a way to put across to others what has been understood."<sup>25</sup> The first books (1–3) discuss the way of discovery and the next deals with the way of putting those discoveries across. And Augustine further classified all teaching (*omnis doctrina*) into two categories: "All teaching is either about things or signs; but things are learned about through signs."<sup>26</sup> He admitted that teaching has to be through words (*uerba*). "Nobody, after all, uses words except for the sake of signifying something" (*nemo enim utitur uerbis nisi aliquid significandi gratia*). Augustine's meticulous investigation into words and signs in *De doctrina Christiana* books 2–4 and its achievement is a monumental work for the

24 Kazuhiko Demura, "Concept of Heart in Augustine of Hippo: Its Emergence and Development," in *Studia Patristica*, vol. 70, edited by Markus Vinzent, papers presented at the 16th International Conference on Patristic Studies, Oxford 2011 (Leuven: Peeters, 2013), 5–11. On the heart in Augustine's sermons see Colleen Hoffman Gowans, *The Identity of the True Believer in the Sermons of Augustine of Hippo: A Dimension of His Christian Anthropology* (Lewiston, N.Y.: Edwin Mellen Press, 1998).

25 Augustine, *De doc. Chr.* 1.1.1 (NBA 8.12): "Duae sunt res quibus nititur omnis tractatio Scripturarum, modus inueniendi quae intellegenda sunt et modus proferendi quae intellecta sunt."

26 *Ibid.*, 1.2.2 (NBA 8.12): "Omnis doctrina uel rerum est uel signorum, sed res per signa discuntur."

philosophy of language and philosophy of mind;<sup>27</sup> however, Augustine started his considerations by concentrating on “things as they are” (*res quod sunt*), not “as they signify something else besides themselves” (*non quod aliud etiam praeter se ipsas significant*). And through his examination of these things, he tried to illuminate the conditions in which human beings live. Poverty and riches are of course one of the human conditions, but he considered them in this broader perspective. Here we have to rethink the modern connotation of ‘doctrine’. Augustine’s treatment of this matter is not a doctrinal one. *De doctrina Christiana* book 1 is a study on how people should live and what should be their primary concern. He first introduces the distinction about how we are to deal with things: they are to be enjoyed (*fruendum*) or to be used (*utendum*).

There are some things which are meant to be enjoyed, others which are meant to be used, yet others which do both the enjoying and using. Things that are to be enjoyed make us happy; things which are to be used help us on our way to happiness providing us, so to say, with crutches and props for reaching the things that will make us happy, and enabling us to keep them.<sup>28</sup>

In the middle of book 1 Augustine dealt with the Lord’s commandment of love. *De doctrina Christiana* is, in a sense, a rubric on what has to be understood in the commandment of love,<sup>29</sup> but he considered it in a philosophical way and defined love in the framework of the thing which is to be enjoyed (*fruendum*).

So what all that has been said amounts to, while we have been dealing with things, is that the fulfilment and the end of the law and of all the divine scripture is love; love of the thing which is to be enjoyed, and of the thing which is able to enjoy that thing together with us, because there is no need for a commandment that we should love ourselves.<sup>30</sup>

27 See Robert A. Markus, *Signs and Meanings: World and Text in Ancient Christianity* (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 1996), 1–43; and 105–24.

28 Augustine, *De doct. Chr.* 1.3.3 (NBA 8.14): “Res ergo aliae sunt quibus fruendum est, aliae quibus utendum, aliae quae fruuntur et utuntur. Illae quibus fruendum est nos beatos faciunt; istis quibus utendum est tendentes ad beatitudinem adiuuamur et quasi adminiculamur, ut ad illas quae nos beatos faciunt, peruenire atque his inhaerere possimus.”

29 On ‘love’ see Tarsicius van Bavel, “Love,” in *Augustine through the Ages: An Encyclopaedia*, ed. Allan D. Fitzgerald (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Wm.B. Eerdmans), 509–16.

30 Augustine, *De doct. Chr.* 1.35.39 (NBA 8.52): “Omnium igitur, quae dicta sunt, ex quo de rebus tractamus, haec summa est, ut intellegatur Legis et omnium divinarum

In Augustine's considerations here, not only natural things like plants, animals, the earth, the sun and the stars, and artificial things like tools and instruments, but also human beings and God are included among the 'things'. Here the human beings under consideration are both the self and the other person, and Augustine was viewing human being in terms of a body integrated with soul, mind, and heart

If we focus on human *affectus*, Augustine said about other neighbouring persons:

All people are to be loved equally; but since you cannot be of service to everyone, you have to take greater care of those who are more closely joined to you by a turn, so to say, of fortune's wheel, whether by occasion of place or time, or any other such circumstances. . . . In the same way, as you are unable to take care of all your fellow men, treat it as the luck of the draw when time and circumstance brings some into closer contact with you than others.<sup>31</sup>

Augustine's rather casual way about neighbours in this treatment, which emerges with the expressions "luck of the draw" and "fortune's wheel," will not satisfy Thomas Aquinas,<sup>32</sup> and Allen and Morgan suggest, "Love of God and love of neighbour are questions based on the character of love and its manifestation, not on the identity of the 'poor'."<sup>33</sup> They sharply point out that

this absence of the poor in the *De doctrina christiana* reflects the pattern in Augustine's theoretical works. Mention of poverty as a social phenomenon is always subordinate to his concern to articulate issues of doctrine or theology in an abstract fashion.<sup>34</sup>

In my estimation, this 'abstract fashion' of Augustine's argument has its own intrinsic merit. It will be able to relativise people's psychological pre-understanding of the poor.

---

Scripturarum plenitude et finis esse dilectio rei, qua fruendum est, et rei, quae nobis cum ea re frui potest, quia ut se quisque diligit, praecepto non opus est."

31 Ibid., 1.28.29 (NBA 8.40): "Omnes autem aequè diligendi sunt. Sed cum omnibus prodesse non possis, his potissimum consulendum est, qui pro locorum et temporum uel quarumlibet rerum opportunitatibus constrictius tibi quasi quadam sorte iunguntur. . . sic in hominibus quibus omnibus consulere nequeas, pro sorte habendum est, prout quisque tibi temporaliter colligatus adhaerere potuerit."

32 See Hill, *Saint Augustine: Teaching Christianity*, 127, n.28.

33 Allen and Morgan, "Augustine on Poverty," 143.

34 Ibid.

Emotions such as love and hate, fear and disgust, pity and respect, etc., move human beings. The rhetorical skill of the preacher conveys the formation of the emotions and actions in the human mind. However, any action and emotion has to be orientated in the essence of the person. If not, such emotions and actions, especially utterance and judgement, may be nothing but prejudices and pretensions. They disguise their own true selves. Augustine knew the power of rhetoric very well; he used to be a professor of rhetoric in Milan. Recent studies indicate that Augustine used rhetoric in his sermons and writings effectively against the background of later Latin Stoic theory of the emotions, moral motivations, and actions.<sup>35</sup>

Augustine always gazed at the human individual as such and its essence. His primary concern was to grasp the affections within the central core of the individual heart (*cor*) of each person he met and to understand their true (sometimes hidden) intentions. Emotions, wills, and actions can be corrected from this perspective. The case of Antoninus, his mother, and step-father is a good example. After having provided them with some general aid for their economic destitution, Augustine required them to rectify their way of life. Augustine's intention lay in assisting whomever he met to seek as their destinations that place where true happiness will be realised.

The metaphor of journey and the road is dominant throughout this book. The poor and the rich are simply human beings who happen to meet in this world. Edmund Hill commented on this point that,

He spent a very large part of his life travelling; and while he undoubtedly felt immense relief whenever he reached his destination . . . I am sure he did not refuse to enjoy whatever distractions the journeys offered, if only the conversation of his companions.<sup>36</sup>

Of course, he did not make such enjoyments his goal. Our aim in life is to reach the perfect joys of the true destination and enjoy them. According to Augustine's famous distinction between use (*uti*) and enjoyment (*frui*), we have to 'use' the world, not 'enjoy' it. However, expressions such as using the world or using the other person in order to enjoy God the supreme goodness, sound misleading, if we understand them to mean that Augustine did not care for the enjoyment of this world, but only sought for spiritual and intellectual detachment from

---

35 Richard Sorabji, *Emotion and Peace of Mind: From Stoic Agitation to Christian Temptation* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000); and Sarah Catherine Byers, *Perception, Sensibility, and Moral Motivation in Augustine: A Stoic-Platonic Synthesis* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013).

36 Hill, *Saint Augustine: Teaching Christianity*, 126, n.4.

it. He did care. It is certain that the Neo-Platonic understanding of this world had a strong influence on Augustine, but in the Christian teaching Augustine embraced the grave significance of the individual human body should not be forgotten. Human beings live their lives here in this world, not only holding an other-worldly-oriented intellectual transcendent intention; rather each individual is asked to live in this world in their bodies. We will make this point clear by examining Augustine's anthropological metaphor of the travellers who use vehicles to travel to their destination. He claims:

Supposing then we were exiles in a foreign land, and could only live happily in our own country, and that being unhappy in exile we longed to put an end to our unhappiness and to return to our country, we would of course need land vehicles or sea-going vessels, which we would have to make use of in order to be able to reach our own country, where we could find true enjoyment.<sup>37</sup>

He added,

Well that's how it is in this mortal life in which we are exiles *away from the Lord* (2 Cor 5:6); if we wish to return to our home country, where alone we can be truly happy, we have to use this world, not enjoy it, so that we may behold *the invisible things of God, brought to our knowledge through the things that have been made* (Rom 1:20); that is, so that we may proceed from temporal and bodily things to grasp those that are eternal and spiritual.<sup>38</sup>

We can perceive here some resonance with Plotinus, especially with the image of returning to the home country (*patria*).<sup>39</sup> But Augustine focused on the concrete earthly vehicles the *peregrini* have to 'use'. And although the *peregrini* are

---

37 Augustine, *De doct. Chr.* 1.4.4 (NBA 8.14): "Quomodo ergo, si essemus peregrini, qui beate uiuere nisi in patria non possemus, eaque peregrinatione utique miseriam finire cupientes, in patriam redire uellemus, opus esset uel terrestribus uel marinis uehiculis quibus utendum esset ut ad patriam, qua fruendum erat, peruenire ualeremus."

38 Ibid. (NBA 8.16): "Sic in huius mortalitatis uita peregrinantes a Domino, si redire in patriam uolumus, ubi beati esse possimus, utendum est hoc mundo, non fruendum, ut inuisibilia Dei, per ea quae facta sunt, intellecta conspiciantur, hoc est, ut de corporalibus temporalibusque rebus aeterna et spiritalia capiamus."

39 See Plotinus, *Enn.* 1.6.8.

away from their home country, they have already a wish or a hope for the happiness that should be enjoyed at the destination. So I would like to translate *peregrini* as ‘travellers’ and *peregrinatio* as ‘journey’. The most important lesson Augustine offered here is that we have some contact with the eternal spiritual reality in this mortal life in the temporal bodily world.<sup>40</sup> In this context, the metaphor of the road or way (*uia*) along which travellers walk should be highlighted. And of course it is this road that God incarnate took:

Of this we would be quite incapable, unless Wisdom herself had seen fit to adapt herself even to such infirmity as ours, and had given us an example of how to live, in no other mode than the human one, because we too are human. . . . So since she herself is our home, she also made herself for us into the way home.<sup>41</sup>

It is noteworthy that here Christ “the way, the truth, and the life” (John 14:6) is substituted for Wisdom (*sapientia*). And he said, “we are still on the way, a way however not from place to place, but one travelled by the affections.”<sup>42</sup> The *affectus* are not feelings, low passions, or desires but the whole disposition of both the mind and body of a human being. Human beings walk on the way to Wisdom herself by their own *affectus* to live. Here Augustine’s love for God and the love for Wisdom are converged. And we can finally return to the consideration of the commandment of love from this point on. Augustine reminds us of, “the rule of love that God has set for us: *You shall love*, he says, *your neighbour as yourself; God, however, with your whole heart and your whole soul and your whole mind.*”<sup>43</sup> And Augustine paid attention to the fact that all the human thoughts (*cogitationes*), the whole of life (*uita*), and all intelligence

---

40 It is clear that Augustine understood “de corporalibus temporalibusque rebus” in parallel with “per ea quae facta sunt (Rom 1:20).” So I think we should read *de* here not as “away from” but rather as “by means of.”

41 Augustine, *De doct. Chr.* 1.11.11 (NBA 8.22): “Quod non possemus, nisi ipsa sapientia tantae etiam nostrae infirmitati congruere dignaretur et uiuendi nobis/praeberet exemplum, non aliter quam in homine, quoniam et nos homines sumus. . . . Cum ergo ipsa sit patria, uiam se quoque nobis fecit ad patriam.”

42 *Ibid.*, 1.17.16 (NBA 8.28): “Porro quoniam in uia sumus, nec uia ista locorum est, sed affectuum.”

43 *Ibid.*, 1.22.21 (NBA 8.32): “Haec enim regula dilectionis diuinitus constituta est: *Diliges*, inquit, *proximum tuum tamquam teipsum, Deum uero ex toto corde, ex tota anima, ex tota mente.*”

(*intellectus*) we are required to focus on are received from God. And Augustine concluded by emphasising the strong *affectus* of love for God:<sup>44</sup>

By loving them, you see, in this way as themselves, they are relating all their love of themselves and of the others to that love of God, which allows no channel to be led off from itself that will diminish its own flow.<sup>45</sup>

Augustine admitted every human being as a traveller on the path of Christ. And every human being must be a lover of God. This text in *De doctrina Christiana* is crucial:

And the supreme reward is that we should enjoy him [God] and that all of us who enjoy him should also enjoy one another in him.<sup>46</sup>

So now we can properly understand Augustine's use of the expressions 'fortune's wheel' and 'luck of the draw,' if we see the form of a traveller in the neighbour we happen to meet.

Hannah Arendt poignantly points out the incongruity between Augustine's love for God and his love for neighbour and asks, "the question of how the person in God's presence, isolated from all things mundane, can be at all interested in his neighbour."<sup>47</sup> Arendt first accepts Augustine's definition of love as craving desire (*appetitus*): "to love is indeed nothing else than to crave something for its own sake," and "love is a kind of craving."<sup>48</sup> But the desire (*appetitus*) is only a part of *affectus*. If we understand that Augustine's view is concentrated in the whole *affectus* of a human being, the incongruity that Arendt points out will be dissolved.

It is my belief that Augustine developed the concept of the anthropology of *peregrini* in *De doctrina Christiana* when he had just been elevated a bishop and accepted the heavy responsibility of the church. This concept would maturely be developed in his great work *De ciuitate Dei*. His sermons were founded on his understanding of human beings:

44 Augustine's love of God (*amor Dei* or *dilectio Dei*) in his treatises normally means love for God, based upon his characteristic interpretation of Rom 5:5.

45 Augustine, *De doct. Chr.* 1.22.21 (NBA 8.32): "Sic enim eum diligens tamquam seipsum totam dilectionem sui et illius refert in illam dilectionem Dei, quae nullum a se riuum ludi extra patitur, cuius deriuatione minuat." "

46 *Ibid.*, 1.32.35 (NBA 8.48): "Haec autem merces summa est ut ipso perfruamur, et omnes qui eo fruimur, nobis etiam inuicem in ipso perfruamur."

47 Hannah Arendt, *Love and Saint Augustine* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996), 7.

48 Augustine, *De diu. quaest.* LXXXIII 35.1 and 2 (NBA 6/2 68; 70): "nihil enim aliud est amare quam propter se ipsam rem aliquam appetere" and "amor appetitus quidam est."

Let us love, let us love freely and for nothing. It is God, after all, whom we love, than whom we can find nothing better. Let us love him for his own sake, and ourselves and each other in him, but still for his sake. You only love your friend truly, after all, when you love God in your friend, either because he is in him, or in order that he may be in him. That is true love and respect.<sup>49</sup>

The poor and the rich are the same as human beings who happen to meet on the journey in this world:

God made both the rich and the poor. Scripture speaks: The rich man and the poor have met each other, but the Lord made them both (*Prv.* 22:2). The rich man and the poor man met each other. On what road, if not in this life? . . . You have met each other, walking together along the road. Don't you squeeze him, don't you cheat him. This one is in dire need, that one has plenty. But the Lord made them both, . . . let us pray, let us finally arrive.<sup>50</sup>

This type of human encounter and communal unity (*concordia*) might have been different from the cohesion Brown depicts as emerging in the eastern Roman empire.

#### 4 Conclusion

If Augustine's anthropology is as explained above, we must remember that he used the word 'philosophy' always to refer to the original meaning of philosophy: *philo-sophia* the love of wisdom (*amor sapientiae*).<sup>51</sup> His anthropology

49 Augustine, *Sermo* 336.2 (NBA 33.950): "Amemus, gratis amemus: Deum enim amamus, quo nihil melius inuenimus. Ipsum amemus propter ipsum, et nos in ipso, tamen propter ipsum. Ille enim ueraciter amat amicum, qui Deum amat in amico, aut quia est in illo, aut ut sit in illo. Haec est uera dilectio." English translation in Edmund Hill, *Saint Augustine: Sermons*, 11 vols, WSA, 3/1–11 (Hyde Park, N.Y.: New City Press, 1990–1997). See also Raymond Canning, *The Unity of Love for God and Neighbour in St. Augustine* (Heverlee and Leuven: Augustinian Historical Institute, 1993), 2.

50 Augustine, *Sermo* 85.6.7 (NBA 30/1.656): "Et diuitem et pauperem Deus fecit. Scriptura loquitur: *Diues et pauper occurrerunt sibi; fecit autem ambos Dominus. Diues et pauper occurrerunt sibi.* In qua uia, nisi in ista uita? Natus est diues, natus est pauper. Occurristis uobis pariter ambulantes uiam. Tu noli premere, tu noli fraudare. Iste eget, ille habet. *Fecit autem ambos Dominus. . . . oremus, perueniamus.*"

51 Augustine, *Conf.* 3.4.8 (NBA 1. 62); and idem, *De ciu. Dei* 8.1 (NBA 5/1. 540).



is substantially embedded in his understanding of philosophy in its original meaning. His philosophy is a philosophy of travellers on their journey towards God. God is the object of love and that is to be enjoyed (*fruentum*), because this God is nothing but Wisdom.

If we turn to Augustine's personal journey, it was not from West to East, but from North Africa to Italy and back to Africa, where he stayed. His travel was not part of the same stream of eastern monasticism. His library narrowly escaped destruction. His spiritual journey, the change and continuity of his thought, are preserved in his works. We meet the poor and the rich as human beings in his written world.

### Bibliography

- Aristotle. *Ars rhetorica* (English translation in J.H. Freese, *Aristotle*, vol. 22: *The Art of Rhetoric*, LCL. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1926).
- Augustine. *Opera* (*Opere di Sant'Agostino*, Nuova Biblioteca Agostiniana, 44 vols. Rome: Città Nuova Editrice, 1965–2007).
- . *De doctrina Christiana* (English translation in Edmund Hill, *Saint Augustine: Teaching Christianity* (*De doctrina Christiana*), WSA, 1/11. Hyde Park, N.Y.: New City Press, 1996).
- . *Enarrationes in Psalmos* (English translation in Maria Boulding, *Saint Augustine: Expositions of the Psalms*, 6 vols, WSA, 3/15–20. Hyde Park, N.Y.: New City Press, 2000–2004).
- . *Sermones* (English translation in Edmund Hill, *Saint Augustine: Sermons*, 11 vols, WSA, 3/1–11. Hyde Park, N.Y.: New City Press, 1990–1997).
- Plato. *Gorgias* (English translation in W.R.M. Lamb, *Plato*, vol. 3: *Lysis, Symposium, Gorgias*, LCL. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1925).
- . *Phaedrus* (English translation in Harold North Fowler, *Plato*, vol. 1: *Euthyphro, Apology, Crito, Phaedo, Phaedrus*, LCL. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1914).
- Plotinus. *Enneades* (English translation in A.H. Armstrong, *Plotinus*, 7 vols, LCL. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1966–1988).
- Allen, Pauline, and Edward Morgan. "Augustine on Poverty." In Pauline Allen, Bronwen Neil, and Wendy Mayer, *Preaching Poverty in Late Antiquity: Perceptions and Realities*, AKTG, Bd 28, 119–70. Leipzig: Evangelische Verlagsanstalt, 2009.
- Allen, Pauline, Bronwen Neil, and Wendy Mayer. *Preaching Poverty in Late Antiquity: Perceptions and Realities*, AKTG, Bd 28. Leipzig: Evangelische Verlagsanstalt, 2009.
- Arendt, Hannah. *Love and Saint Augustine*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996.
- Atkins, Margaret, and Robin Osborne, eds. *Poverty in the Roman World*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006.

- Brown, Peter. *Poverty and Leadership in the Later Roman Empire*, The Menahem Stern Jerusalem Lectures. Hanover, N.H. and London: University Press of New England, 2002.
- Byers, Sarah Catherine. *Perception, Sensibility, and Moral Motivation in Augustine: A Stoic-Platonic Synthesis*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013.
- Canning, Raymond. *The Unity of Love for God and Neighbour in St. Augustine*. Heverlee and Leuven: Augustinian Historical Institute, 1993.
- Demura, Kazuhiko. "Concept of Heart in Augustine of Hippo: Its Emergence and Development." In *Studia Patristica*, vol. 70, edited by Markus Vinzent, papers presented at the 16th International Conference on Patristic Studies, Oxford 2011, 3–16. Leuven: Peeters, 2013.
- . "Reception of Augustine." In *The Wiley Blackwell Companion to Patristics*, edited by Ken Parry. Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell.
- Fiedrowicz, Michael. "Introduction." In Maria Boulding, trans. *Saint Augustine: Expositions of the Psalms*, vol. 1, WSA, 3/15, 13–66. Hyde Park, N.Y.: New City Press, 2000.
- Finn, Richard. *Almsgiving in the Later Roman Empire: Christian Promotion and Practice (313–450)*, OCM. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006.
- . "Portraying the Poor: Descriptions of Poverty in Christian Texts from the Late Roman Empire." In *Poverty in the Roman World*, edited by Margaret Atkins and Robin Osborne, 130–44. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006.
- Gowans, Colleen Hoffman. *The Identity of the True Believer in the Sermons of Augustine of Hippo: A Dimension of His Christian Anthropology*, Lewiston, N.Y.: Edwin Mellen Press, 1998.
- Markus, Robert A., *Signs and Meanings: World and Text in Ancient Christianity*. Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 1996.
- Neil, Bronwen. "Conclusions." In Pauline Allen, Bronwen Neil, and Wendy Mayer, *Preaching Poverty in Late Antiquity: Perceptions and Realities*, AKTG, Bd 28, 209–31. Leipzig: Evangelische Verlagsanstalt, 2009.
- O'Donnell, James J. *Augustine: A New Biography*. New York: HarperCollins, 2005.
- Osborne, Robin. "Roman Poverty in Context." In *Poverty in the Roman World*, edited by Margaret Atkins and Robin Osborne, 1–20. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006.
- Perler, Othmar, and Jean-Louis Maier. *Les voyages de saint Augustin*, CEASA, vol. 36. Paris: Études augustiniennes, 1969.
- Sorabji, Richard. *Emotion and Peace of Mind: From Stoic Agitation to Christian Temptation*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000.
- Van Bavel, Tarsicius J. "Love." In *Augustine through the Ages: An Encyclopaedia*, edited by Allan D. Fitzgerald, 509–16. Grand Rapids, Mich.: Wm.B. Eerdmans, 1999.

# Innocent I on Heretics and Schismatics as Shaping Christian Identity

*Geoffrey D. Dunn*

## 1 Social Identity and Conflict

At the heart of shaping social identity are the boundaries drawn between us and them. Henri Tajfel points to discrimination against out-groups as the means by which in-groups enhance their self-esteem.<sup>1</sup> A process of categorisation, identification, and comparison creates and reinforces the boundaries and determines one's reactions to them by defining an individual's (and others') place within or outside a group.<sup>2</sup> This collective identity relates not so much the individual to a group, but concerns relations within and between groups.<sup>3</sup> Conflict is an inevitable (necessary but not sufficient, according to Marilyn Brewer)<sup>4</sup> component of self-esteem, as positive self-esteem comes through forming a superior distinctiveness from other groups. There are, of course, various degrees of conflict ranging from bias to violence. Recent research has argued that bias is not the automatic result of categorisation, nor is hostility in the intergroup context, and that the transition from categorisation to discrimi-

---

1 Henri Tajfel, *Human Groups and Social Categories: Studies in Social Psychology* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981), 255; and M.A. Hogg and D. Abrams, "Social Motivation, Self-Esteem and Social Identity," in *Social Identity Theory: Constructive and Critical Advances*, ed. D. Abrams and M.A. Hogg (New York: Harvester Wheatsheaf, 1990), 28–47.

2 Henri Tajfel and J.C. Turner, "The Social Identity Theory of Intergroup Behavior," in *Psychology of Intergroup Relations*, ed. S. Worchel and W.G. Austin, 2nd ed. (Chicago: Nelson-Hall, 1986), 7–24.

3 Peggy A. Thoits and Lauren K. Virshup, "Me's and We's: Forms and Functions of Social Identities," in *Self and Identity: Fundamental Issues*, ed. Richard D. Ashmore and Lee Jussim, RSSSI, vol. 1 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997), 115.

4 Marilyn B. Brewer, "Ingroup Identification and Intergroup Conflict: When Does Ingroup Love Become Outgroup Hate," in *Social Identity, Intergroup Conflict, and Conflict Reduction*, ed. Richard D. Ashmore, Lee Jussim, and David Wilde, RSSSI, vol. 3 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), 19–22, calls this optimal distinctiveness theory.

nation is far from direct. The degree to which differentiation is made distinctive determines levels of hostility.<sup>5</sup>

Social identity theory expresses the idea that a high-status group may be highly discriminatory against a low-status group if they perceive their own superiority as legitimate or under threat.<sup>6</sup> John Turner considered the cohesiveness of in-groups as being based upon a depersonalising willingness to conform and a perception of fewer categorical differences between members of a group but more with other groups.<sup>7</sup> When a group develops greater interdependence, becomes more highly segmented, or is perceived as threatened, then indifference to an out-group develops into antagonism.<sup>8</sup> Whatever its degree, this all may be classified as conflict. Threat is considered an important element in social identity.<sup>9</sup> Social psychologists have acknowledged that differences in religious values can be a cause of intergroup discrimination.<sup>10</sup>

This is certainly true within Christianity. From the New Testament we can tell that from its beginning Christianity grappled with the question of boundaries. The evangelists, particularly Luke, present Jesus as issuing a universal call to salvation, such that Robert O'Toole can write that membership of a given people can lead to elitism and "[i]t is precisely this elitism that Luke breaks down when he insists that Israel can embrace all humankind."<sup>11</sup> Indeed, a passage like Luke 9:50 (Mark 9:40) that whoever is not against us is for us, would suggest that Christian social identity is to be broad and inclusive and that categorisation is to be avoided. Yet, Luke also used a Q-saying (Matt 12:30; Luke 11:23) that whoever is not with me is against me. Scholars have attempted to

- 
- 5 J. Jetten, R. Spears, and A.S.R. Manstead, "Group Distinctiveness and Interrouop Discrimination," in *Social Identity*, ed. N. Ellemers, R. Spears, and B. Doosje (Oxford: Blackwell, 1999), 107–26.
  - 6 J.C. Turner, "Some Current Issues in Research on Social Identity and Self-categorization Theories," in Ellemers, Spears, and Doosje, *Social Identity*, 8.
  - 7 J.C. Turner et al., *Rediscovering the Social Group: A Self-Categorization Theory* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1987).
  - 8 Brewer, "Ingroup Identification and Intergroup Conflict," 32–35.
  - 9 N.R. Branscombe et al., "The Context and Content of Social Identity Threat," in Ellemers, Spears, and Doosje, *Social Identity*, 35–58.
  - 10 Mark Rubin and Miles Hewstone, "Social Identity Theory's Self-Esteem Hypothesis: A Review and Some Suggestions for Clarification," *Personality and Social Psychology Review* 2 (1998): 40–62.
  - 11 Robert F. O'Toole, *The Unity of Luke's Theology: An Analysis of Luke-Acts*, Good News Studies, vol. 9 (Wilmington, Del.: Michael Glazier, 1984), 112.

reconcile the seemingly irreconcilable here,<sup>12</sup> but it does point to the fact that Christianity created identity by drawing boundaries, struggled with the notion of superiority and universality, and engaged in conflict in social categorisation.

Within early Christianity boundaries were drawn on the basis of belief and behaviour. From the time of Titus 3:10 and 1 John 2:19 we find a concern for true belief being the criterion for true community membership, and the use of the term heresy in relation to those who do not belong.<sup>13</sup> It is not possible in a chapter of this length to re-examine the history of heresy. Instead, I wish to consider how conflict within and involving the Roman church in the early fifth century, in particular during the episcopate of Innocent I (402–417), over questions of belief and practice led to categorisation and boundary drawing employing heresy and schism as terms to denigrate the Christian legitimacy of out-groups and as a tool to resolve conflict.

Reading through the surviving letters of Innocent I, we find that early in the fifth century this Roman bishop was especially interested in heretics and schismatics. Of course, the preservation of these letters reflects the interests of men like Dionysius Exiguus who selected the correspondence that interested them, particularly if it was controversial, and incorporated it into the earliest collections of canonical material. These earliest compilers of canonical material chose those letters that could have wider application in the life and behaviour of Christian communities or were sensational or irresistibly appealing. The vast majority of Innocent's letters have not survived and so it would be fair to suggest that heresy and schism did not loom as large in his consciousness as the surviving letters would make it appear. Nonetheless, it is reasonable to conclude that Innocent had a particular concern for regulating the lifestyle of Christians in order to achieve social cohesion, and that included the treatment of dissidents. In this chapter I intend to analyse Innocent's letters in order to demonstrate that his concern was not with the underlying theology to be found in a heretical or schismatic group but with the church's reaction to those who belonged to such groups. Innocent did not debate with them, he dealt with them; his interest was with preserving Christian social identity. The

---

12 Joseph A. Fitzmyer, *The Gospel According to Luke 1–IX*, The Anchor Bible, vol. 28 (New York: Doubleday, 1979), 821.

13 On heresy in early Christianity see Walter Bauer, *Orthodoxy and Heresy in Earliest Christianity*, trans. Philadelphia Seminar on Christian Origins, Eng. ed. (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1971); Robert M. Grant, *Heresy and Criticism: The Search for Authenticity in Early Christian Literature* (Louisville, Ky: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1993); and Gerd Lüdemann, *Heretics: The Other Side of Early Christianity*, trans. John Bowden, Eng. ed. (London: SCM Press, 1996).

boundary drawn by labelling someone a heretic or schismatic was the way of making clear who belonged to the Christian community and who did not, but as we can see from Innocent's surviving letters such a process was not punitive but remedial.

I would like to have considered Innocent's relationship with the Cataphrygians (Montantists), but since this is referred to only in *Liber pontificalis*,<sup>14</sup> and space is limited, I shall restrict myself here to observing that it is likely that Innocent had to deal with them given recent imperial legislation.<sup>15</sup> Perhaps Innocent drove them out of Rome to where they were found on the Via Aurelia Antica or drove them from there further afield.<sup>16</sup> The evidence states that he provided them with somewhere to live, which I take as a statement of detention and close supervision.

## 2 Novatianists and Mountaineers

One of the clearest examples of Innocent responding to practical questions put to him by other bishops comes from his letter to Victricius, bishop of Rouen (Rotomagus). He visited Rome at the end of 403, roughly at the same time as the *adventus* of Emperor Honorius and his court from Ravenna. The bishop had come to pre-empt charges against him of Priscillianism because he was one of the minority of Gallic bishops who supported asceticism.<sup>17</sup> Innocent responded in February 404, presumably after Victricius had returned home. In my estimation, Victricius sought to arm himself with a document of support

14 *Lib. pont.* 42.1 (Th. Mommsen, ed., *Libri pontificalis*, MGHGPR, vol. 1 [Berlin: Weidmann, 1898], 88).

15 *Codex Theodosianus* 16.5.20, 34, 40, and 43 (Th. Mommsen and P. Krüger, eds, *Codex Theodosianus*, vol. 1: *Theodosiani Libri XVI cum constitutionibus Sirmondinis*, pars posterior: *Textus cum apparatu* [Hildesheim: Weidmann, 1990], 862 and 866–69), although there can be some debate about whether or not the last law confused Montantists and Mountaineers and if the Priscillianists are followers of Priscillian or Priscilla.

16 See William Tabbernee, *Montanist Inscriptions and Testimonia: Epigraphic Sources Illustrating the History of Montanism*, Patristic Monograph Series, vol. 16 (Macon, Ga: Mercer University Press, 1997), 456; and idem, *Prophets and Gravestones: An Imaginative History of Montanists and Other Early Christians* (Peabody, Mass.: Hendricksons, 2009), 251.

17 For the background see Geoffrey D. Dunn, "Canonical Legislation on the Ordination of Bishops: Innocent I's Letter to Victricius of Rouen," in *Episcopal Elections in Late Antiquity*, ed. Johan Leemans, Peter Van Nuffelen, Shawn W.J. Keough, and Carla Nicolaye, AKG, Bd 119 (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2011), 145–66.

from Innocent with which to confront his anti-ascetical opponents in Gaul. Innocent saw his document not just as a response to some questions but as a *liber regularum*, which, if observed, would mean

ambition will cease, dissention will come to an end, heresies and schisms will not emerge, the devil will not have the opportunity of raging, unanimity will endure, iniquity having been overcome will be crushed, the truth will blaze with spiritual heat, [and] peace having been proclaimed on the lips with the desire of the soul will be in harmony.<sup>18</sup>

My interest here is with what Innocent had to say about heretics or schismatics. The question that Victricius must have posed was what to do with those who belonged to the Novatianist and Mountaineer schisms and who wished reconciliation with the church. Innocent's response was that such people (and interestingly enough he described them as heretics not schismatics) are to be welcomed back through a simple laying-on of hands, since their baptism was valid (which, also interestingly, he described as being "in the name of Christ"). This baptism must refer to what they had received within the break-away community, meaning that their only experience of Christianity had been within such a group.<sup>19</sup> The ritual gesture was no doubt the celebration of reconciliation. The exception to this ready welcoming concerned those who originally had been members of the church but had left to join a break-away or dissident group (where they were 'rebaptised')<sup>20</sup> and who now wished to return to the church. They needed a long period of penance.<sup>21</sup>

---

18 Innocent I, *Ep.* 2.17 (PL 20.481): "cessabit ambitio, dissensio conquietet, haereses et schismata non emergent, locum non accipiet diabolus saeuendi, manebit unanimitas, iniquitas superata calcabitur, ueritas spiritali feruore flagrabit, pax praedicata labiis cum uoluntate animae concordabit." This letter is no. 286 in Philippe Jaffé (with S. Löwenfeld, F. Kaltenbrunner, and P. Ewald), *Regesta Pontificum Romanorum ab condita ecclesia ad annum post Christum natum MCXCVIII*, vol. 1: *A S. Pietro ad a. MCXLIII*, rev. W. Wattenbach, 2nd ed. (Leipzig: Veit, 1885) [= JK].

19 I am well aware that since the argument is about who belonged to the church, calling one group the church or the mainstream community and the other group a dissident or break-away community is to take a stand on this issue. My perspective is that held by Innocent or Cyprian. It also helps me avoid using the terms schismatic and heretical unless these terms are found in the texts themselves.

20 Innocent did not mention those who left the church to join a break-away group but were not 'rebaptised'. This would lead one to conclude that Novatianists and Mountaineers did not regard mainstream initiation as valid.

21 Innocent I, *Ep.* 2.VIII.11 (PL 20.475): "Vt uenientes a Nouatianis uel Montensibus per manus tantum impositionem suscipiantur; quia quamuis ab haereticis, tamen in Christi



Novatian had been a presbyter of Rome in the middle of the third century who was opposed to a laxist or too easy reconciliation of those who had denied their faith in some way during the time of Decius' campaign of traditional religious renewal. When the more accommodating Cornelius was elected as Rome's bishop, Novatian secured his own election as a rival, committed to preserving Rome's rigorist attitude towards the reconciliation of the *lapsi*.<sup>22</sup>

The Mountaineers were the Donatists in Rome, named for the fact that their community outside the city was at a cave closed in by a trellis.<sup>23</sup> Preserving a rigorist tradition from Africa, the Donatists too insisted that the only valid initiation was one received at the hands of a Donatist minister, a position against which Augustine argued in *Contra litteras Petiliani Donatistae Cirtensis episcopi* and *Ad Cresconium*.<sup>24</sup>

If indeed Victricius had asked about these two break-away groups specifically, what Innocent's response suggests is that either Victricius was asking out of curiosity about what Rome did with regard to schismatic groups there or else these groups had spread to Gaul by the early fifth century. Given my reading of the whole point of Victricius going to Rome and asking for Innocent's responses to his questions, I would have to think that the second option is more likely.

What we find here in Innocent is a complete lack of discussion about what these two groups believed or even the history of their rebellions; his only interest was with what to do with them when they realised their error. Those still entrenched in those sects simply were ignored. Laying-on hands for those returning from schism or heresy had long been the practice of many

---

nomine sunt baptizati: praeter eos, qui si forte a nobis ad illos transeuntes rebaptizati sunt. Hi si resipiscentes, et ruinam suam cogitantes, redire maluerint, sub longa poenitentiae satisfactione admittendi sunt."

- 22 See Geoffrey D. Dunn, *Cyprian and the Bishops of Rome: Questions of Papal Primacy in the Early Church*, ECS, vol. 11 (Strathfield, N.S.W.: St. Pauls Publications, 2007), 48–58.
- 23 Optatus, *De schis.* 2.4 (SC 412.248); Jerome, *In chronico ad annum Christi* 355 (GCS 47.239); Filastrius of Brescia, *Diuersarum hereseon liber* 83 (CCL 9.253); pseudo-Jerome, *Indiculus de haeresibus* 47 (PL 81.643); Augustine, *De haeresibus* 69.3 (NBA 12/1.130). See Brent D. Shaw, "Who were the Circumcellions?," in *Vandals, Romans and Berbers: New Perspectives on Late Antique North Africa*, ed. A.H. Merrills (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2004), 235. On the Donatists in general see Peter Ivan Kaufman, "Donatism Revisited: Moderates and Militants in Late Antique North Africa," *JLA* 2 (2009): 131–42.
- 24 See Maureen Tilley, "Theologies of Penance during the Donatist Controversy," in *Studia Patristica*, vol. 35, ed. M.F. Wiles and E.J. Yarnold, papers presented at the 13th International Conference on Patristic Studies, Oxford 1999 (Leuven: Peeters, 2001), 330–37; and Adam D. Ployd, "The Power of Baptism: Augustine's Pro-Nicene Response to the Donatists," *JES* 22 (2014): 519–40.



ancient churches. Indeed, Cyprian of Carthage, Novatian's contemporary, had accepted that this was the correct practice for those who had been baptised in the church, had left it by joining a break-away group, and who then wanted to come back.<sup>25</sup> Confusion and disagreement between Cyprian and Stephen of Rome had been over what to do with those individuals whose initiation had not been within the mainstream church but only within a break-away group. These people needed to be baptised if they wished to join the church, according to Cyprian, since initiation performed in heresy or schism was not valid.<sup>26</sup> In this regard Cyprian's standpoint was the same as that of the Novatianists. For Stephen, however (as for Innocent), the initiation performed in a break-away community was valid and if such a person wanted to join the church over which a legitimate bishop presided, all that was necessary ritually was a penitential laying-on of hands.<sup>27</sup>

We know from a correspondent of Cyprian that the Novatianists only accepted mainstream Christians into their communities if they underwent a new initiation.<sup>28</sup> Innocent would seem to be evidence that the Novatianists in Rome continued this practice into the fifth century.

Innocent's distinguishing between the two groups, i.e., those from a non-Christian background who were initiated into a break-away group (and who

---

25 Cyprian, *Ep.* 71.2.1–2 (CCL 3C.518–19).

26 *Ibid.*, 71.2.3 (CCL 3C.519); 72.1.1–3 (CCL 3C.523–525); and 73.6.2 (CCL 3C.536).

27 *Ibid.*, 74.1.2–74.2.1 (CCL 3C.564–565) and 75.5.2 (CCL 3C.585–86). A similar thought is expressed in the anonymous *De rebapt.* 1 (CSEL 3/3.69–71), although I have held that its author, in referring to the requirement for a laying-on of hands, refers to the conferring of the Spirit rather than reconciliation.

28 Cyprian, *Ep.* 73.2.1 (CCL 3C.530–31). See also Eusebius, *H.E.* 7.8 (GCS n.F. 6/2.646). The question of whether or not this was universal Novatianist practice in both Italy and Africa, in part depends on how one interprets passages in Cyprian, *Epp.* 74.1.2 (CCL 3C.564): “*ipsi haeretici proprie alterutrum ad se uenientes non baptizent, sed communicent tantum;*” 74.4.1 (CCL 3C.568); and 75.7.1 (CCL 3C.587), where Stephen of Rome is quoted as stating that the heretics do not rebaptise those who come to them from heretics. I have argued that this could indicate that Novatianist practice differed, with those in Africa practising rebaptism (which is what Cyprian and his correspondent and Eusebius knew) and those in Rome not (which is what Stephen knew). See Dunn, *Cyprian and the Bishops of Rome*, 154. Stuart G. Hall, “Stephen I of Rome and the One Baptism,” in *Studia Patristica*, vol. 17/2, ed. Elizabeth A. Livingstone, papers presented at the 8th International Conference on Patristic Studies, Oxford 1979 (Oxford: Pergamon, 1982), 796; believes that Stephen was distinguishing Novatianists from heretics (*ipsi haeretici*) and that therefore the Novatianists in Rome were rebaptising. I do not find such a clear-cut distinction between the notions of heresy and schism, at least in Cyprian's thinking. See Geoffrey D. Dunn, “Heresy and Schism according to Cyprian of Carthage,” *JTS* n.s. 55 (2004): 551–74.

only needed the laying-on of hands to join a legitimate church) and those from a Christian background who had been ‘rebaptised’ into schism and now wanted to come back (and who needed the long period of penance), seems to indicate that the latter, since they ought to have known better, needed to be scrutinised more carefully. Yet the penance was not to be too onerous, as Innocent indicated in a letter to another Gallic bishop, Exsuperius of Toulouse (Tolosa). Christian penance for any type of sin was not to smack of Novatianist harshness.<sup>29</sup>

### 3 Priscillianists

Early in his episcopate Innocent responded to information brought to him by two Spanish clerics about the quarrel and schism in the churches of the Spanish provinces.<sup>30</sup> Priscillian of Ávila (Abila) had been at the centre of schism in the region from his condemnation at the Synod of Zaragoza (Caesaraugusta) in 380<sup>31</sup> until his execution by imperial authority (albeit by a usurper) in 385 over his strict asceticism, possible Gnostic Manichaeism, and supposed sorcery. At a synod in Toledo (Toletum) in 400 it had been agreed to accept repentant Priscillianist bishops back into communion as bishops, except that some bishops in Baetica or Carthagenensis had refused to endorse such radical leniency and had created further division within the Spanish churches by

29 Innocent I, *Ep.* 6.11.6 (PL 20.498–99 = JK 293). On Exsuperius see Geoffrey D. Dunn, “Episcopal Crisis Management in Late Antique Gaul: The Example of Exsuperius of Toulouse,” *Antichthon* 48 (2014): 126–43.

30 Innocent I, *Ep.* 3.1 (PL 20.486 = JK 292): “super dissensione et schismate ecclesiarum.” For an overview on Priscillian and Priscillianism in general see Virginia Burrus, *The Making of a Heretic: Gender, Authority, and the Priscillianist Controversy*, TCH, vol. 24 (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1995); S.J.G. Sánchez, *Priscillien, un chrétien non conformiste. Doctrine et pratique du Priscillianisme du IV<sup>e</sup> au VI<sup>e</sup> siècle*, Théologie historique, vol. 120 (Paris: Beauchesne, 2009); and Joop van Waarden, “Priscillian of Avila’s *Liber ad Damasum* and the Inability to Handle a Conflict,” in *Violence in Ancient Christianity: Victims and Perpetrators*, ed. Albert C. Geljon and Riemer Roukema, VCSupp, vol. 125 (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2014), 132–50.

31 Burrus, *The Making of a Heretic*, 55–56; and Alberto Ferreiro, “Petrine Primacy, Conciliar Authority, and Priscillian,” in *I concili della cristianità occidentale secoli III–V*, XXX Incontro di studiosi dell’antichità cristiana, Roma, 3–5 maggio 2001, SEAug, vol. 78 (Rome: Institutum Patristicum Augustinianum, 2002), 631–45, accept Priscillian’s own claims in *Tract. 2* (M. Conti, ed., *Priscillian of Avila: The Complete Works*, OECT [Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010], 70 and 78, that no one was condemned at Zaragoza.

themselves breaking off communion with their colleagues. Innocent was happy to intervene and help repair this further Spanish fracturing.<sup>32</sup> Innocent observed that the excommunication of Priscillianists had achieved its purpose: those, like Symphosius and Dictinius, who had been cut off came to their senses and repented of their mistakes.<sup>33</sup> Nothing is said about those who persisted in schism.

Priscillianism is described as an abominable sect (“detestabilis secta”) but the disagreement about how to deal with repentant Priscillianists was even worse in that it led to good men championing a bad cause, even if that cause was normal church policy.<sup>34</sup> The bad cause was the unwillingness to heal the rifts in the Spanish churches by allowing Priscillianist bishops to take up their former positions. While such unwillingness was standard practice, what made it bad in this instance was that the insistence on following it, in the face of a decision by a synod to relax it, led to a rupture of ecclesial peace and unity. For Innocent, as for the bishops at Toledo, a little leniency could help overcome the original schism whereas a hard-line approach, though true to ecclesiastical tradition, could have risked it carrying on longer. The total stability of the faith is established on concord,<sup>35</sup> and this seems to be more important than anything else. The leniency only went so far, however. The bishops at Toledo had decided that anyone who was a penitent could not be admitted to the clergy.<sup>36</sup> Innocent would propose a similar solution for the situation of the Bonosians in Illyria, as we shall see shortly: those validly ordained could be received back into ministry (as were Peter, Thomas and King David, who served as his scriptural proof), but those invalidly ordained ought only be received back as laymen. In a letter to Apulian bishops Innocent would refer to Nicaea and iterate

---

32 On the relationship between Rome and Spain at this time see Geoffrey D. Dunn, “Innocent I and the First Synod of Toledo,” in *The Bishop of Rome in Late Antiquity*, ed. Geoffrey D. Dunn (Farnham: Ashgate, 2015), 89–107.

33 Innocent I, *Ep.* 3.1.2 (PL 20.487): “ut personis talibus amputatis exstingueretur penitus innata dissensio.” A sentence or two earlier Innocent indicated that it was not just a matter of schismatics coming to their senses when he wrote that “consilio saniore conuersi sunt.”

34 *Ibid.* (PL 20.486–87): “cum utique bono cuique in rebus talibus uinci melius sit, quam malo more prauum propositum quod semel placuit obtinere.”

35 *Ibid.* 3.1 (PL 20.486): “concordiam, in qua fidei nostrae stabilitas tota consistit.”

36 First Synod of Toledo, can. 2 (G. Martínez Díez, ed., *La colección canónica Hispana*, 4: *Concilios galos, Concilios hispanos: primera parte*, Monumenta Hispaniae Sacra, Series canonica, vol. 4 [Madrid: Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas, 1984], 328–29).

that one who has performed penance is not to be admitted to the lower ranks of the clergy, let alone the episcopate.<sup>37</sup>

Interestingly, Innocent did not threaten excommunication against the hard-line bishops. He left it to the Spanish bishops to pursue the unity that the church needed.<sup>38</sup> Perhaps the fact that he mentioned how excommunication had worked against some Priscillianists could indicate that he was suggesting tacitly that excommunication could have the same effect on the hard-line anti-Priscillianists.

#### 4 Pelagians

The second group mentioned in *Liber pontificalis* are the individuals, Pelagius and Caelestius, who are named as heretics.<sup>39</sup> Innocent is perhaps best known for his involvement in the Pelagian controversy, an involvement that occurred right at the end of his life since there is a bundle of letters that also deal with this issue. Indeed, it is the only thing about him recorded in Gennadius' one-sentence biography.<sup>40</sup> Early in 417, just weeks before his death, Innocent responded to three letters he had received from Africa.<sup>41</sup> Two were from episcopal synods, and one was from a small composite group of five bishops who had attended one or another of the synods, headed by Aurelius, Alypius, and Augustine.<sup>42</sup> The Africans announced that Pelagius and Caelestius and their

37 Innocent I, *Ep.* 39 (PL 20.606 = JK 316). See Geoffrey D. Dunn, "Innocent I's Letter to the Bishops of Apulia," *J ECS* 21 (2013): 27–41.

38 Innocent I, *Ep.* 3.1.4 (PL 20.488–89).

39 *Lib. pont.* 42.2 (MGHGPR 1.88).

40 Gennadius, *De uir. illus.* 44 (E.C. Richardson, ed., *Hieronymus: Liber de uiris inlustribus, Gennadius: Liber de uiris inlustribus*, TU, vol. 14 [Leipzig: J.C. Hinrich, 1896], 77).

41 Innocent I, *Epp.* 29 (PL 20.582–88 = JK 321 = Augustine, *Ep.* 181 [NBA 22.902–12]); 30 (PL 20.588–93 = JK 322 = Augustine, *Ep.* 182 [NBA 22.914–20]); and 31 (PL 20.593–97 = JK 323 = Augustine, *Ep.* 183 [NBA 22.922–26] = *Coll. Avell. Ep.* 41 [CSEL 35.92–96]).

42 Augustine, *Epp.* 175 (NBA 22.842–50 = Innocent I, *Ep.* 26 [PL 20.564–68]); 176 (NBA 22.852–56 = Innocent I, *Ep.* 27 [PL 20.568–71]); and 177 (NBA 22.858–78 = Innocent I, *Ep.* 28 [PL 20.571–82]). On the Pelagian controversy see Otto Wermelinger, *Rom und Pelagius. Die theologische Position der römischen Bischöfe in pelagianischen Streit in den Jahren 411–432, Päpste und Papsttum*, Bd 7 (Stuttgart: Anton Hiersemann, 1975); and Pearce James Carefoote, "Augustine, the Pelagians and the Papacy: An Examination of the Political and Theological Implications of Papal Involvement in the Pelagian Controversy" (STD diss., Katholieke Universiteit Leuven, 1995).

views had been anathematised (“anathemauerint”),<sup>43</sup> because of their sacrilegious arguments (“istorum sacrilegas disputationes”), which were deadly for Christ’s flock,<sup>44</sup> as the authors of a most pernicious error (“perniciosissimi erroris”), in the hope that they might be healed and not cut off from the church,<sup>45</sup> but nowhere do they employ the term heretic or schismatic to describe the two.

Innocent assured the Africans that he knew how to condemn what is evil.<sup>46</sup> Innocent made some reference to the ideas attributed to Pelagius and Caelestius, particularly the notion of the possibility of achieving goodness without divine initiative, but only as a summary of the report he had received.<sup>47</sup> However, his primary concern was with how to preserve the church from further damage. For him, their ideas were a pestilential venom (“pestiferum . . . uirus”), an accursed disease (“exsecrandus . . . morbus”), and a gangrenous wound and infection that needed to be cut out lest it corrupt the rest of the body.<sup>48</sup> This solution is repeated towards the end of the letter. The infected wound is to be removed from the healthy body and the sick animal from the purified flock.<sup>49</sup> Yet the condemned themselves remained part of a bishop’s care. They too could return to the church, stepping back from the precipice on which they stood, and be reincorporated into the sheepfold if they renounced their opinions and relied upon the help of God, which they wished to deny others relying upon.<sup>50</sup> While these opinions are called a perverted doctrine (“doctrinae peruersitate”),<sup>51</sup> Innocent failed to use the term heresy or schism to describe them.

This concern is repeated in the letter to the Numidian bishops under Silvan. The safety of the flock is the utmost responsibility of the shepherds who govern the churches. The sheep are to be prevented from wandering off; those who have are to be cut off, but welcomed back if they make amends.<sup>52</sup> The authors of this new heresy (“nouae haereseos . . . auctores”) were to be shunned.<sup>53</sup> Here

---

43 Augustine, *Ep.* 175.1 (NBA 22.844).

44 *Ibid.*, 175.4 (NBA 22.848); and 176.3 (NBA 22.854).

45 *Ibid.*, 176.4 (NBA 22.856).

46 Innocent I, *Ep.* 29.1 (PL 20.583): “tam mala damnare nouimus.”

47 *Ibid.*, 29.4–6 (PL 20.585–87).

48 *Ibid.*, 29.2 (PL 20.584).

49 *Ibid.*, 29.8 (PL 20.587): “Separetur ergo a sano corpore uulnus insanum, remotoque morbi saeuientis afflatu, cautius quae sunt sincera perdurent, et grex purior ab hac mali pecoris contagione purgetur.”

50 *Ibid.*, 29.8 (PL 20.588).

51 *Ibid.* See also Innocent I, *Ep.* 30.3 (PL 20.591).

52 Innocent I, *Ep.* 30.1 (PL 20.589–90).

53 *Ibid.*, 30.2 (PL 20.590). In 30.6 (PL 20.592), Pelagius and Caelestius are named.

Innocent was more forthcoming in using this term than he had been in the previous letter or the Africans had been. Once again there is some general discussion about what this heresy entails,<sup>54</sup> but the letter ends with practical action: the excommunication of Pelagius and Caelestius (or the Roman endorsement of the excommunication already issued in Africa) until they repent, and of anyone who would agree with them.<sup>55</sup>

This hope for the reconciliation of the excommunicated is expressed strongly in Innocent's letter to the five bishops headed by Aurelius.<sup>56</sup> Failing that, Innocent points to the duty of bishops to offer assistance to those led astray by the teaching of these two.<sup>57</sup> The position of Pelagius and Caelestius is called wretched and impious ("miser impiusque"),<sup>58</sup> but the language of heresy is not employed.

What emerges from these three letters from Innocent is his role as pastor, concerned about the integrity of the flock. Anything that corrupts it is to be expelled, but always with the possibility of being welcomed back if the medicine of repentance is taken. What are we to make of the fact that except for one instance, in none of the letters from Innocent or in those from Africa to him is the term heresy applied to the teaching or the term heretic applied to Pelagius or Caelestius, even though the Africans and Innocent saw the ideas as deviant, dangerous, and deserving condemnation?

It is in the context of the Pelagian controversy that we have another group of letters from Innocent concerning Jerome and the attack in 416 on his monasteries in Bethlehem, instigated by John, bishop of Jerusalem it was supposed, a supporter of Pelagius.<sup>59</sup> In the letter to Jerome, Innocent stated that nothing good comes from controversy and that heretics ought to be rebuked at the beginning of a dispute rather than be engaged in an ongoing dispute.<sup>60</sup> The reference is to Titus 3:9–10. Perhaps Innocent was informing Jerome that

---

54 Ibid., 30.3–5 (PL 20.590–92).

55 Ibid., 30.6 (PL 20.592–93).

56 Innocent I, *Ep.* 31.4 (PL 20.596).

57 Ibid., 31.5 (PL 20.597).

58 Ibid., 31.1 (PL 20.594).

59 Innocent I, *Epp.* 33 (PL 20.600 = JK 327 = Jerome, *Ep.* 135 [CSEL 56/1.263] = *Coll. Avell. Ep.* 44 [CSEL 35.98]); 34 (PL 20.600–601 = JK 326 = Jerome, *Ep.* 136 [CSEL 56.1.263–64] = *Coll. Avell. Ep.* 42 [CSEL 35.96–97]); and 35 (PL 20.601–602 = JK 325 = Jerome, *Ep.* 137 [CSEL 56/1.264–65] = *Coll. Avell. Ep.* 43 [CSEL 35.97–98]). On these letters see Geoffrey D. Dunn, "Innocent I and the Attacks on the Bethlehem Monasteries," *JAEMA* 2 (2006): 69–83.

60 Innocent I, *Ep.* 34 (PL 20.600): "Numquam boni aliquid contentionem fecisse in ecclesia testatur apostolus; et ideo haereticorum correptiones primum fieri iubet magis, quam diuturna duci collatione."

the East engaged in too much theological debate with regard to heresy and not enough imposition of ecclesiastical discipline.<sup>61</sup>

## 5 Bonosians

Another schismatic and heretical group to occupy Innocent's time as bishop were the Bonosians. Bonosus had been bishop of Niš (Naissus), the provincial capital of Dacia Mediterranea, in the civil diocese of Dacia, in the prefecture of Illyricum Orientale.<sup>62</sup> At the Synod of Capua in late 391 or early 392, held under Ambrose's presidency, the question of Bonosus' heresy, since he was a supporter of Helvidius in denying the perpetual virginity of Mary, was referred to the Illyrian bishops to decide, under the leadership of Anysius, bishop of Thessaloniki (Thessalonica).<sup>63</sup> Reaching a negative conclusion about Bonosus' orthodoxy, they wrote to Ambrose, but he wrote back to them agreeing with their findings and leaving them to pass judgement.<sup>64</sup> The Illyrians deposed him as bishop, on the grounds of what today we would describe as his heresy. Bonosus refused to accept this and established a schism, attracting many of his clergy to join him (whom we may term the validly ordained), and then ordained new clergy (whom we may term the invalidly ordained).<sup>65</sup> The

61 Dunn, "Innocent I and the Attack on the Bethlehem Monasteries," 77.

62 For a survey of those who support Innocent I in believing that Bonosus was bishop of Niš instead of ps.-Marius Mercator, *Appendix ad contrad. xii anathem. Nest.* 15 (PL 48.928) see Geoffrey D. Dunn, "Innocent I and Anysius of Thessalonica," *Byz* 77 (2007): 135, n.51.

63 Ambrose, *Ep.* 10.71.1 (CSEL 82/3.7). On Bonosus' theological position see Charles William Neumann, *The Virgin Mary in the Works of Saint Ambrose*, Paradosis, vol. 17 (Fribourg: University Press, 1962), 211–23, although there is much about his historical reconstruction that needs to be treated carefully.

64 Ambrose, *Ep.* 10.71.1–2 (CSEL 82/3.7–8).

65 I disagree with Malcolm R. Green, "Pope Innocent I: The Church of Rome in the Early Fifth Century" (DPhil diss., Oxford, 1973), 108, who suggests that the schism had started before the Synod of Capua met. I also disagree with Erich Caspar, *Geschichte des Papsttums von den Anfängen bis zur Höhe der Weltherrschaft*, Bd 1: *Römische Kirche und Imperium Romanum* (Tübingen: J.C.B. Mohr [Paul Siebeck], 1930), 312, who considered that Innocent was dealing with exactly the same situations in *Epp.* 16 (= JK 299) and 17 (= JK 303), moving from a lenient to harsh policy. Certainly one was more lenient than the other, and what is proposed in *Ep.* 17 is tighter, but it was a tightening up of what Anysius had done, not what Innocent himself had done in *Ep.* 16. Innocent's two letters deal with two different groups of clerics: those ordained before Bonosus' condemnation (and who joined him in schism), and those ordained by him after it.



question that then confronted the Illyrian churches was what to do with these two types of schismatic clergy if they wanted to leave Bonosus' schism.

The practice that the Illyrians adopted under Anysius seems to be to have allowed validly ordained schismatic clergy who wished to leave Bonosus to return to the church after a period of penance, and even to resume their clerical responsibilities (akin to the position taken at Toledo in 400). This leniency when compared with what we find, for example from the Synod of Granada (Elvira), where repentant schismatic clergy could be welcomed back to the church but only as laymen, would suggest the seriousness of the impact of Bonosus' schism in Niš.<sup>66</sup> What adds to that sense of seriousness and leniency is the fact that the Illyrians, while accepting the invalidity of ordinations performed by Bonosus after his deposition ("ab haereticis ordinatos"),<sup>67</sup> also admitted invalidly ordained schismatic clergy who wished to leave Bonosus into their churches as clerics, provided that they submitted to a valid ordination, which we may loosely but not accurately describe as reordination.<sup>68</sup>

In 412, after he had replaced Anysius as bishop of Thessaloniki,<sup>69</sup> Rufus wrote to Innocent asking if Anysius' policy of allowing repentant, validly ordained, schismatic clergy back into ministry still should remain the practice. Innocent replied in the non-extant letter mentioned in *Epistula* 16 that it was. When Marcian, a successor to Bonosus in Niš, began to require reordination for such readmission, a letter of complaint was forwarded to Innocent, to which he replied with *Epistula* 16, condemning such an innovation.<sup>70</sup> Innocent refers to the error of Bonosus and his condemnation but does not refer to heresy or schism as such in the letter.

---

66 Synod of Granada (Elvira), can. 51 (G. Martínez Díez, ed., *La colección canónica Hispana*, 4: *Concilios galos, Concilios hispanos: primera parte*, Monumenta Hispaniae Sacra, Series canonica, vol. 4 [Madrid: Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas, 1984], 258). Augustine, *De bapt.* 1.1.2 (NBA 15/1.268–70), argued that whether or not such a schismatic cleric ought to be allowed to resume ministry when reconciled from schism depended upon the needs of the church. See *idem*, *Ep.* 185.10.44 (NBA 23.66), where he was prepared to accept this for repentant Donatist clergy.

67 Innocent I, *Ep.* 17.III.7 (PL 20.530).

68 *Ibid.*, 17.V.9 (PL 20.531).

69 On Rufus as bishop of Thessaloniki see Geoffrey D. Dunn, "Innocent I and Rufus of Thessalonica," *JbOB* 59 (2009): 51–64.

70 Innocent I, *Ep.* 16 (PL 20.519–21). See Geoffrey D. Dunn, "The Letter of Innocent I to Marcian of Niš," in *Saint Emperor Constantine and Christianity*, ed. D. Bojović, International Conference Commemorating the 1700th Anniversary of the Edict of Milan, 31 May–2 June 2013, 2 vols (Niš: PIYHTA, 2013), 1.319–38.



The more difficult question of Anysius and the Illyrians' other practice, that of ordaining the invalidly ordained, then arose. Here Innocent addressed the Illyrians twice, with only the second letter (*Epistula* 17) extant. Innocent considered this practice a necessary remedy to an extreme situation, but only for a strictly limited time, as long as the emergency lasted. In more normal times, which it now was, the traditional practice of not ordaining anyone who had been ordained in schism ought to stand.<sup>71</sup> This was an argument Innocent would repeat on another occasion to some Italian bishops.<sup>72</sup> Innocent's argument was that anyone upon whom a heretic laid hands in ordination was wounded and in need of the remedy of penance, and that after penance a scar is left where once there was the wound,<sup>73</sup> and the scar makes one ineligible for ordination.<sup>74</sup> Unlike with his correspondence with the Africans, Innocent was not loathe to use the term heretic with regard to Bonosus.

The Illyrians appealed to the Council of Nicaea, which had made provision that clergy returning from the Cathari, whom we may equate with the Novatianists, could continue as clergy after a laying-on of hands.<sup>75</sup> The council was not specific about whether or not this applied to clergy who had been ordained before joining the schismatic group or those ordained by a schismatic bishop.<sup>76</sup> It is not clear also whether the laying-on of hands was a gesture of reconciliation or of ordination.<sup>77</sup> It is clear that the Illyrians took it to mean

---

71 Innocent I, *Ep.* 17.IV.8–17.V.9 (PL 20.531). The question of whether that person had been initiated in the church and had left it or had been initiated in schism was irrelevant.

72 Innocent I, *Ep.* 39 (PL 20.606 = JK 316).

73 Innocent I, *Ep.* 17.III.7 (PL 20.530): “cum nos dicamus, ab haereticis ordinatos, uulneratum per illam manus impositionem habere caput. Et ubi uulnus infixum est, medicina adhibenda est, ut possit recipere sanitatem. Quae sanitas post uulnus secuta, sine cicatrice esse non poterit.” Bonosus qualified both as a heretic and schismatic. I would doubt that Innocent intended his restrictive comments to apply only to those ordained by heretics and not by simple schismatics as well.

74 *Ibid.*, 17.IV.8 (PL 20.531). See Geoffrey D. Dunn, “Innocent I and the Illyrian Churches on the Question of Heretical Ordination,” *JAEMA* 4 (2008): 72–74.

75 Council of Nicaea, can. 8 (G. Alberigo et al., *Concilioorum Oecumenicorum Generaliumque Decreta*, vol. 1: *The Oecumenical Councils from Nicaea I to Nicaea II* [325–787], CCCOGD, vol. 1 [Turnhout: Brepols, 2006], 8).

76 Perhaps by the time of Nicaea all Novatianist clergy were those who had been ordained by a Novatianist bishop rather than clergy defecting from a mainstream church. Nicaea is a problem for Innocent either way: it was recognising the validity of ordination performed in heresy for the Novatianists or was recognising the possibility of “reordaining” Novatianists. Neither was a practice Innocent wanted to see repeated.

77 H.E.J. Cowdrey, “The Dissemination of St. Augustine’s Doctrine of Holy Orders during the Latter Patristic Period,” *JTS* n.s. 20 (1969): 459–60, leaves the matter of what Nicaea

ordination and for the invalidly ordained. Innocent's own position, while described in *Epistula* 17, is less than clear. His basic argument is that whatever was granted at Nicaea applied to Novatianists alone "and does not pertain to the clerics of other heresies."<sup>78</sup> This would seem to indicate that Innocent was taking the Illyrians' interpretation at face value and engaging with it and that what is being discussed is 'reordination'.<sup>79</sup> Yet, the fact that Innocent uses the verb *manere* in his translation of the Nicene canon, speaks of 'clerics' in other heresies, and speaks of them returning ("reuertentes") and being taken back ("recipi")<sup>80</sup> could suggest that he is thinking of validly ordained clerics who subsequently have joined schism (who would therefore experience laying-on of hands as a gesture of reconciliation upon returning to the church), since he has already made it clear that ordination performed in heresy is completely ineffectual. This is strengthened by his next statements about the inability to repeat valid baptism<sup>81</sup> and about those who leave the Catholic church to join heresy and who then wish to return. Laypeople in that position cannot then join the clergy. The upshot for Innocent is that those whom Bonosus attempted to ordain after his condemnation were not ordained and, after any subsequent reconciliation with the church, were thereafter ineligible for ordination.<sup>82</sup>

Innocent's two surviving letters on the Bonosian crisis make the following points clearly. The Roman bishop accepted that a validly ordained cleric could,

---

meant open, noting only that later western canonical tradition took it to mean 'reordination'. See C.H. Turner, "Apostolic Succession," in *Essays on the Early History of the Church and Ministry*, ed. H.B. Swete, 2nd ed. (London: Macmillan, 1921), 176–77 and 208–10. Peter L'Huillier, *The Church of the Ancient Councils: The Disciplinary Work of the First Four Ecumenical Councils* (Crestwood, N.Y.: St Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1996), 59–60, considers that χειροθετουμένων in the canon refers to a laying-on of hands for ordaining those whose "first" ordination was not accepted as valid rather than one for reconciliation.

78 Innocent I, *Ep.* 17.V.10 (PL 20.532): "nec ad aliarum haeresum clericos pertinere."

79 Dunn, "Innocent I and the Illyrian Churches," 75.

80 While *recipio* could be translated as "accepted" or "received" and therefore refer to the invalidly ordained, the use of *reuerto* makes the other translation more probable.

81 Innocent I, *Ep.* 17.V.10 (PL 20.533). Therefore, the laying-on of hands in Acts 8:16–17 was not a rebaptism but only a completion of initiation (with the implied parallel that returning validly ordained schismatic clergy needed only reconciliation), while in Acts 19:2–3 those who were invalidly baptised needed valid baptism or 'rebaptism' (with the implied parallel that invalidly ordained schismatic clergy needed 'reordination'). Rather than draw that second implication, Innocent would go on to say that having participated in schism they were rendered ineligible of ordination.

82 *Ibid.*, 17.V.11 (PL 20.533–34). In addition, laypeople coming to the church after schismatic initiation could be reconciled as members of the church but were also as ineligible for ordination as were invalidly ordained clergy.

if he reconciled with the church after having been in schism or heresy, become active in ministry again (*Epistula* 16). Such a person should not be subject to any new ordination ritual (*Epistula* 16). A schismatic or heretical bishop could not ordain validly and any person supposedly ordained in schism was invalidly ordained (*Epistula* 17).<sup>83</sup> In a change to the exception the Illyrians had practised for two decades, Innocent stated that the traditional practice of banning invalidly ordained schismatic clergy from receiving valid ordination ought now to be observed. Innocent was concerned with finding solutions to problems while maintaining both fidelity to the church's teaching and traditions and a sense of care and leniency for sinners.

## 6 Schism at Antioch

After the Council of Nicaea in 325 the church of Antioch was rent by internal division for nearly a century as various communities formed around competing theological notions of the relationship of the Son to the Father. Those who supported the *homoousios* position endorsed by the council gathered around Eustathius, the bishop of Antioch at the time of the council, who was exiled soon after it, and his successors like Paulinus and Evagrius. The *anomoios* party gathered around Eudoxius and then Euzoios and Dorotheos, and the *homoiios* party around Meletius, who was appointed bishop in 360. Although Meletius' exact theological position is hard to determine, in that it might have changed over time or been concealed at the time of his appointment, he became increasingly Nicene in outlook. However, there was no reconciliation with the *homoousios* party of Antioch under Paulinus, since Meletius had been ordained by Arian bishops.<sup>84</sup> Meletius was succeeded by Flavian. Under Flavian the schism largely had been healed, although there were some bishopless Paulinians and Evagrians in Antioch and abroad. These internal divisions had an impact on Antioch's relationship with the other major churches. The church of Rome had

83 Why a heretical/schismatic bishop could baptise validly but could not ordain validly is nowhere explained by Innocent.

84 See T. Karmann, *Meletius von Antiochien. Studien zur Geschichte des trinitätstheologischen Streits in den Jahren 360–364 n. Chr.*, Regensburger Studien zur Theologie, Bd 68 (Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 2009); K. McCarthy Spoerl, "The Schism at Antioch since Cavallera," in *Arianism after Arius: Essays on the Development of the Fourth-Century Trinitarian Conflict*, ed. M.R. Barnes and D.H. Williams (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1993), 101–26; and Robin Ward, "The Schism at Antioch" (PhD diss., King's College, London, 2003).

supported Paulinus and Evagrius rather than Flavian, but reconciled with him in about 398.<sup>85</sup>

A fresh strain on the relationship between Antioch and Rome occurred with the final exile of John Chrysostom in 404, the onetime Antiochene presbyter and then bishop of Constantinople, and the hasty replacement of the now dead Flavian with Porphyry at the instigation of Acacius of Beroea, who had also been instrumental in removing John from Constantinople. John found a staunch ally in Innocent and after a legation from the West had been badly treated in the East, Innocent broke off communion with Constantinople, Antioch, and Alexandria, as well as Beroea and a number of other churches.<sup>86</sup> In the other letters we are considering in this chapter we find Innocent responding to a pre-existing problem, but this is a rupture in the church's communion formalised by Innocent himself.<sup>87</sup>

In about 413 Alexander was elected bishop of Antioch following the death of Porphyry. He found it advantageous to make peace with Rome by rehabilitating the memory of John and to make peace with the remnants of the internal schisms dividing the church of Antioch.<sup>88</sup> He wrote to Rome informing Innocent of this, and Innocent replied with a series of letters (*Epistulae* 19 from a synod of bishops to Alexander, 20 from Innocent himself to Alexander, and 21 from Innocent to Acacius of Beroea). We do not find Innocent referring to a schism as such but to an ancient blemish that has been cleansed ("antiqui naeui purgatio") and to the re-establishment of communion as the first fruits of our peace ("primitias pacis nostrae"). Writing to Boniface, one of his own clerics who would later succeed him, Innocent spoke of the Antiochene church not suffering long to be estranged from the Roman church, and the resultant wholeness and unity.<sup>89</sup> Those exiled supporters of Paulinus and Evagrius who

---

85 For a review of this process of recognition of Flavian see Geoffrey D. Dunn, "The Roman Response to the Ecclesiastical Crises in the Antiochene Church in the Late-Fourth and Early-Fifth Centuries," in *Ancient Jewish and Christian Texts as Crisis Management Literature*, ed. David C. Sim and Pauline Allen (London: Continuum, 2011), 112–28.

86 Palladius, *Dial.* 20.433–439 (SC 341.430–32); Theodoret, *HE* 5.34.11 (GCS n.F. 5, 336–37). See Geoffrey D. Dunn, "The Date of Innocent I's *Epistula* 12 and the Second Exile of John Chrysostom," *GRBS* 45 (2005): 155–70; and idem, "Roman Primacy in the Correspondence Between Innocent I and John Chrysostom," in *Giovanni Crisostomo: Oriente e Occidente tra IV e V secolo*, XXXIII Incontro di studiosi dell'antichità cristiana, Roma 6–8 maggio 2004, *SEAug.* vol. 93/2 (Rome: Institutum Patristicum Augustinianum, 2005), 687–98.

87 Innocent I, *Ep.* 22 (PL 20.545 = JK 308), would refer to it as a *communio suspensa*.

88 Theodoret, *HE* 5.35.3–4 (GCS n.F. 5, 337).

89 Innocent I, *Ep.* 23 (PL 20.546–47 = JK 309). On this letter see Geoffrey D. Dunn, "Innocent I's Appointment of Boniface as Papal Legate to Constantinople?," *SE* 51 (2012): 135–49.

had received clerical office in Italy had been the final negotiating point,<sup>90</sup> and when Alexander was prepared to recognise their ordinations as valid, peace was struck, even with Acacius.

## 7 Photinians

The last of Innocent's letters of interest to us here is *Epistula* 41 to Lawrence, whom I consider to be an Italian bishop in Siena.<sup>91</sup> Photinus, a bishop of Sremska Mitrovica (Sirmium) in the mid-fourth century, seems to have held some kind of adoptionist christological views, like Marcellus of Ankara (Ancyra).<sup>92</sup> Within early Christianity his followers were identified as Bonosians, as the rubric supplied for this letter by Dionysius Exiguus indicates.<sup>93</sup> Innocent informs Lawrence what had been done at Rome to deal with this group and, as his metropolitan, instructs his suffragan to take similar advantage of the civil law, through the *defensores ecclesiae*, and deprive them of their property and have them expelled.<sup>94</sup>

There is no talk about trying to reconcile these heretics with the church. One can guess that such a tactic had been attempted unsuccessfully and that the appeal to civil authority was something of a last resort to remove a problem group who would not repent and whose continuing existence threatened the harmony of the local church in Rome. This is Innocent at his most extreme; these heretics were not to be ignored, they were to be removed.

## 8 Conclusion

Differences in belief forced early Christians to define what they believed and to use those beliefs to draw boundaries between those who belonged to the church and those who did not. This was the process of categorisation seen by social identity theorists as building up a positive self-esteem for the in-group

90 From Innocent I, *Ep.* 23 (PL 20.546–47), it appears that the Evagrians in Italy had been ordained by Evagrius himself in Antioch before going into exile.

91 Innocent I, *Ep.* 41 (PL 20. 607–608 = JK 318). On this letter see Geoffrey D. Dunn, "Innocent I's Letter to Lawrence: Photinians, Bonosians, and the *Defensores ecclesiae*," *JTS* n.s. 63 (2012): 136–55.

92 See Dunn, "Innocent's Letter to Lawrence," 138–41.

93 *Ibid.*, 137–38.

94 *Ibid.*, 144–48. Cf. Caroline Humfress, "A New Legal Cosmos: Late Roman Lawyers and the Early Medieval Church," in *The Medieval World*, ed. Peter Lineham and Janet L. Nelson (London and New York: Routledge, 2001), 572.

by differentiating them from the out-group and asserting their superiority in that the out-groups were denied legitimacy. What we see in the surviving letters of the early fifth-century Roman bishop, Innocent I, is that much of the conflict between groups competing for the right to call themselves Christian came in the early stages. Once the boundary was drawn, through the declaration that a group with deviant belief or practice was heretical or schismatic, the tendency was just to ignore them. The declaration had served its purpose in removing what was seen as an infection or poison from tainting the rest of the community, which thereby served as a warning to the community exactly whom to avoid.

Antagonism built until avoidance could result. It would seem that in most cases the church was then prepared, from its 'superior' position, to disregard former members until they admitted their error. In such cases, as we see with Innocent's instructions about Novatianists, Mountaineers, Priscillianists, Pelagians, and Bonosians, there was a lenient policy of readmitting repentant out-group members to communion within the church. The leniency, however, did not usually extend to those who had assumed leadership positions in schism (as opposed to those who had held leadership positions before they entered schism). One could conclude that in many instances the out-groups were small and that isolation from the main group eventually was sufficient for members to seek readmission.

In some instances, as with Montanists and Photinians, it is obvious that the out-groups did not take their exclusion quietly but continued to engage with the in-group in conflict behaviour. In those instances it appears that Innocent was not adverse to involving imperial power to enforce discrimination against the out-group by depriving them of property rights and freedom of movement.

Except in the Pelagian controversy, which erupted during his episcopate and where he did comment on the nature of the heresy, Innocent was not concerned to rehash the theological arguments about matters of faith and belief that had been decided in the past. His concern was only to maintain authentic Christian identity through a shared and agreed set of beliefs and practices, to which repentant schismatics and heretics were welcome to return once they admitted their error. Innocent's moderate position seems to have been reasonably successful.

## Bibliography

Ambrose. *Epistulae* (Otto Faller and Michela Zelzer, eds, *Sancti Ambrosii Opera*, pars 10: *Epistulae et Acta*, CSEL, vols 82/1–4. Vienna: Hölder, Pichler Tempsky and Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1968–1996).

- Augustine. *Opera* (*Opere di Sant'Agostino*, NBA, 44 vols. Rome: Città Nuova Editrice, 1965–2007).
- Codex Theodosianus* (Th. Mommsen and P. Krüger, eds, *Codex Theodosianus*, vol. 1: *Theodosiani Libri xvi cum constitutionibus Sirmondinis*, pars posterior: *Textus cum apparatu*. Hildesheim: Weidmann, 1990).
- Council of Nicaea. *Canones* (G. Alberigo et al., *Conciliorum Oecumenicorum Generaliumque Decreta*, vol. 1: *The Oecumenical Councils from Nicaea 1 to Nicaea II [325–787]*, CCCOGD, vol. 1, 17–34. Turnhout: Brepols, 2006).
- Cyprian. *Epistulae* (G.F. Diercks, ed., *Sancti Cypriani episcopi epistularium*, CCL, vols 3B and 3C. Turnhout: Brepols, 1994–1996).
- De rebaptismate* (Wilhelm von Hartel, ed., *S. Thasci Caecili Cypriani opera omnia*, CSEL, vol. 3/3, 69–92. Vienna: C. Geroldi, 1871).
- Eusebius. *Historia ecclesiastica* (Eduard Schwartz, Theodor Mommsen, and Friedhelm Winkelmann, eds, *Eusebius Caesariensis. Werke*, vol. 2/1–3: *Die Kirchengeschichte*, GCS n.F. 6/1–3. Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1999).
- Filastrius Brixiensis. *Diuersarum hereseon liber* (F. Heylen, ed., *Filastrii episcopi Brixiensis diuersarum hereseon liber*, CCL, vol. 9, 215–324. Turnhout: Brepols, 1957).
- Gennadius. *De uiris illustribus* (E.C. Richardson, ed., *Hieronymus: Liber de uiris illustribus*, Gennadius: *Liber de uiris inlustribus*, TU, vol. 14, 57–97. Leipzig: J.C. Hinrich, 1896).
- Innocent I. *Epistulae* (PL 20.457–638).
- Jerome. *Epistulae* (Isidor Hilberg, ed., *Sancti Eusebii Hieronymi Epistulae*, CSEL, vols, 54, 55, and 56. Vienna: Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1996).
- . *In chronico ad annum Christi* (Rudolf Helm, ed., *Eusebius. Werke*, vol. 17: *Die Chronik des Hieronymus*, GCS, Bd 47. Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1956).
- Liber pontificalis* (Theodor Mommsen, ed., *Libri pontificalis*, MGHGPR, vol. 1. Berlin: Weidmann, 1898).
- Optatus. *De schismate* (Mireille Labrousse, ed., *Optat de Miléve. Traité contre les Donatistes*, 2 vols, SC, vol. 412 and 413. Paris: Éditions du Cerf, 1995–1996).
- Palladius. *Dialogus de uita sancti Ioannis Chrysostomi* (Anne-Marie Malingrey and Philippe Leclercq, eds and trans., *Palladius. Dialogue sur la vie de Jean Chrysostome*, SC 341. Paris: Éditions du Cerf, 1988).
- Priscillian. *Tractatus* (Marco Conti, ed., *Priscillian of Avila: The Complete Works*, OECT. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010).
- Pseudo-Jerome. *Indiculus de haeresibus* (PL 81.636–46).
- Pseudo-Marius Mercator. *Appendix ad contradictionem xii anathematismi Nestoriani* (PL 48.907–32).
- Synod of Granada (Elvira). *Canones* (G. Martínez Díez, ed., *La colección canónica Hispana*, 4: *Concilios galos, Concilios hispanos: primera parte*, Monumenta Hispaniae Sacra, Series canonica, vol. 4, 233–68. Madrid: Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas, 1984).



- Synod of Toledo. *Canones* (G. Martínez Díez, ed., *La colección canónica Hispana*, 4: *Concilios galos, Concilios hispanos: primera parte*, Monumenta Hispaniae Sacra, Series canonica, vol. 4, 323–44. Madrid: Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas, 1984).
- Theodoret. *Historia ecclesiastica* (Günther Christian Hansen, ed., *Theodoretus Cyri. Historia ecclesiastica*, GCS n.F. 5, 3rd ed. Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1998).
- Branscombe, N.R., et al., “The Context and Content of Social Identity Threat.” In *Social Identity*, edited by N. Ellemers, R. Spears, and B. Doosje, 35–58. Oxford: Blackwell, 1999.
- Brewer, Marilynn B. “Ingroup Identification and Intergroup Conflict: When Does Ingroup Love Become Outgroup Hate?” In *Social Identity, Intergroup Conflict, and Conflict Reduction*, edited by Richard D. Ashmore, Lee Jussim, and David Wilde, *RSSSI*, vol. 3, 17–41. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001.
- Burrus, Virginia. *The Making of a Heretic: Gender, Authority, and the Priscillianist Controversy*, TCH, vol. 24. Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1995.
- Carefoote, Pearce James. “Augustine, the Pelagians and the Papacy: An Examination of the Political and Theological Implications of Papal Involvement in the Pelagian Controversy.” STD diss., Katholieke Universiteit Leuven, 1995.
- Caspar, Erich. *Geschichte des Papsttums von den Anfängen bis zur Höhe der Weltherrschaft*, Bd 1: *Römische Kirche und Imperium Romanum*. Tübingen: J.C.B. Mohr (Paul Siebeck), 1930.
- Coleman-Norton, P.R. *Roman State and Christian Church: A Collection of Legal Documents to A.D. 535*. London: SPCK: 1966.
- Cowdrey, H.E.J. “The Dissemination of St. Augustine’s Doctrine of Holy Orders during the Latter Patristic Period.” *JTS* n.s. 20 (1969): 448–81.
- Dunn, Geoffrey D. “Heresy and Schism according to Cyprian of Carthage.” *JTS* n.s. 55 (2004): 551–74.
- . “The Date of Innocent I’s *Epistula* 12 and the Second Exile of John Chrysostom.” *GRBS* 45 (2005): 155–70.
- . “Roman Primacy in the Correspondence between Innocent I and John Chrysostom.” In *Giovanni Crisostomo: Oriente e Occidente tra IV e V secolo*, XXXIII Incontro di studiosi dell’antichità cristiana, Roma 6–8 maggio 2004, *SEAug*, vol. 93/2, 687–98. Rome: Institutum Patristicum Augustinianum, 2005.
- . “Innocent I and the Attacks on the Bethlehem Monasteries.” *JAEMA* 2 (2006): 69–83.
- . *Cyprian and the Bishops of Rome: Questions of Papal Primacy in the Early Church*, ECS, vol. 11. Strathfield, N.S.W.: St. Pauls Publications, 2007.
- . “Innocent I and Anysius of Thessalonica.” *Byz* 77 (2007): 124–48.
- . “Innocent I and the Illyrian Churches on the Question of Heretical Ordination.” *JAEMA* 4 (2008): 65–82.
- . “Innocent I and Rufus of Thessalonica.” *JbOB* 59 (2009): 51–64.



- . “Canonical Legislation on the Ordination of Bishops: Innocent I’s Letter to Victricius of Rouen.” In *Episcopal Elections in Late Antiquity*, edited by Johan Leemans, Peter Van Nuffelen, Shawn W.J. Keough, and Carla Nicolaye, AKG, Bd 119, 145–66. Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2011.
- . “The Roman Response to the Ecclesiastical Crises in the Antiochene Church in the Late-Fourth and Early-Fifth Centuries.” In *Ancient Jewish and Christian Texts as Crisis Management Literature*, edited by David C. Sim and Pauline Allen, 112–28. London: Continuum, 2011.
- . “Innocent I’s Appointment of Boniface as Papal Legate to Constantinople?” *SE* 51 (2012): 135–49.
- . “Innocent I’s Letter to Lawrence: Photinians, Bonosians, and the *Defensores ecclesiae*.” *JTS* n.s. 63 (2012): 136–55.
- . “The Letter of Innocent I to Marcian of Niš.” In *Saint Emperor Constantine and Christianity*, edited by D. Bojović, International Conference Commemorating the 1700th Anniversary of the Edict of Milan, 31 May–2 June 2013, 2 vols, 1.319–38. Niš: ПУHTA, 2013.
- . “Innocent I’s Letter to the Bishops of Apulia.” *JECS* 21 (2013): 27–41.
- . “Episcopal Crisis Management in Late Antique Gaul: The Example of Exsuperius of Toulouse.” *Antichthon* 48 (2014): 126–43.
- . “Innocent I and the First Synod of Toledo.” In *The Bishop of Rome in Late Antiquity*, edited by Geoffrey D. Dunn, 89–107. Farnham: Ashgate, 2015.
- Ferreiro, Alberto. “Petrine Primacy, Conciliar Authority, and Priscillian.” In *I concili della cristianità occidentale secoli III–V*, XXX Incontro di studiosi dell’antichità cristiana, Roma, 3–5 maggio 2001, SEAug, vol. 78, 631–45. Rome: Institutum Patristicum Augustinianum, 2002.
- Fitzmyer, Joseph A. *The Gospel According to Luke I–IX*, The Anchor Bible, vol. 28. New York: Doubleday, 1979.
- Green, Malcolm R. “Pope Innocent I: The Church of Rome in the Early Fifth Century.” DPhil diss., Oxford University, 1973.
- Hall, Stuart G. “Stephen I of Rome and the One Baptism.” In *Studia Patristica*, vol. 17/2, edited by Elizabeth A. Livingstone, papers presented at the 8th International Conference on Patristic Studies, Oxford 1979, 796–98. Oxford: Pergamon, 1982.
- Hogg, M.A., and D. Abrams. “Social Motivation, Self-Esteem and Social Identity.” In *Social Identity Theory: Constructive and Critical Advances*, edited by D. Abrams and M.A. Hogg, 28–47. New York: Harvester Wheatsheaf, 1990.
- Humfress, Caroline. “A New Legal Cosmos: Late Roman Lawyers and the Early Medieval Church.” In *The Medieval World*, edited by Peter Lineham and Janet L. Nelson, 557–75. London and New York: Routledge, 2001.
- Jaffé, Philippe (with S. Löwenfeld, F. Kaltenbrunner, and P. Ewald), *Regesta Pontificum Romanorum ab condita ecclesia ad annum post Christum natum MCXCVIII*, vol. 1: A S. Pietro ad a. MCXLIII, rev. W. Wattenbach. 2nd ed. Leipzig: Veit, 1885.

- Jetten, J., R. Spears, and A.S.R. Manstead. "Group Distinctiveness and Intergroup Discrimination." In *Social Identity*, edited by N. Ellemers, R. Spears, and B. Doosje, 107–26. Oxford: Blackwell, 1999.
- Karmann, T. *Meletius von Antiochien. Studien zur Geschichte des trinitätstheologischen Streits in den Jahren 360–364 n. Chr.*, Regensburger Studien zur Theologie, Bd 68. Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 2009.
- Kaufman, Peter Ivan. "Donatism Revisited: Moderates and Militants in Late Antique North Africa." *JLA* 2 (2009): 131–42.
- L'Huillier, Peter. *The Church of the Ancient Councils: The Disciplinary Work of the First Four Ecumenical Councils*. Crestwood, N.Y.: St Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1996.
- Neumann, Charles William. *The Virgin Mary in the Works of Saint Ambrose*, Paradosis, vol. 17. Fribourg: University Press, 1962.
- O'Toole, Robert F. *The Unity of Luke's Theology: An Analysis of Luke-Acts*, Good News Studies, vol. 9. Wilmington, Del.: Michael Galzier, 1984.
- Ployd, Adam P. "The Power of Baptism: Augustine's Pro-Nicene Response to the Donatists." *J ECS* 22 (2014): 519–40.
- Rubin, Mark, and Miles Hewstone. "Social Identity Theory's Self-Esteem Hypothesis: A Review and Some Suggestions for Clarification." *Personality and Social Psychology Review* 2 (1998): 40–62.
- Sánchez, S.J.G. *Priscillien, un chrétien non conformiste. Doctrine et pratique du Priscillianisme du IV<sup>e</sup> au VI<sup>e</sup> siècle*, Théologie historique, vol. 120. Paris: Beauchesne, 2009.
- Shaw, Brent D. "Who were the Circumcellions?" In *Vandals, Romans and Berbers: New Perspectives on Late Antique North Africa*, edited by A.H. Merrills, 227–58. Aldershot: Ashgate, 2004.
- Spoerl, K. McCarthy. "The Schism at Antioch since Cavallera." In *Arianism after Arius: Essays on the Development of the Fourth-Century Trinitarian Conflict*, edited by M.R. Barnes and D.H. Williams, 101–26. Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1993.
- Tabbernee, William. *Montanist Inscriptions and Testimonia: Epigraphic Sources Illustrating the History of Montanism*, Patristic Monograph Series, vol. 16. Macon, Ga: Mercer University Press, 1997.
- . *Prophets and Gravestones: An Imaginative History of Montanists and Other Early Christians*. Peabody, Mass.: Hendricksons, 2009.
- Tajfel, Henri. *Human Groups and Social Categories: Studies in Social Psychology*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981.
- Tajfel, Henri, and J.C. Turner. "The Social Identity Theory of Intergroup Behavior." In *Psychology of Intergroup Relations*, edited by S. Worchel and W.G. Austin, 7–24. 2nd ed. Chicago: Nelson-Hall, 1986.
- Thoits, Peggy A., and Lauren K. Virshup. "Me's and We's: Forms and Functions of Social Identities." In *Self and Identity: Fundamental Issues*, edited by Richard D. Ashmore and Lee Jusim, R S S 1, vol. 1, 106–33. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997.

- Tilley, Maureen. "Theologies of Penance during the Donatist Controversy." In *Studia Patristica*, vol. 35, edited by M.F. Wiles and E.J. Yarnold, papers presented at the 13th International Conference on Patristic Studies, Oxford 1999, 330–37. Leuven: Peeters, 2001.
- Turner, C.H. "Apostolic Succession." In *Essays on the Early History of the Church and Ministry*, edited by H.B. Swete, 176–77 and 208–10. 2nd ed. London: Macmillan, 1921.
- Turner, J.C., et al., *Rediscovering the Social Group: A Self-Categorization Theory*. Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1987.
- Turner, J.C. "Some Current Issues in Research on Social Identity and Self-categorization Theories." In *Social Identity*, edited by N. Ellemers, R. Spears, and B. Doosje, 1–34. Oxford: Blackwell, 1999.
- Waarden, Joop van. "Priscillian of Avila's *Liber ad Damasum* and the Inability to Handle a Conflict." In *Violence in Ancient Christianity: Victims and Perpetrators*. Edited by Albert C. Geljon and Riemer Roukema, VCSupp, vol. 125, 132–50. Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2014.
- Ward, Robin. "The Schism at Antioch." PhD diss., King's College, London, 2003.
- Wermelinger, Otto. *Rom und Pelagius. Die theologische Position der römischen Bischöfe im pelagianischen Streit in den Jahren 411–432*, Päpste und Papsttum, Bd 7. Stuttgart: Anton Hiersemann, 1975.

**PART 4**

*Byzantium*





## Ariadne Augusta: Shaping the Identity of the Early Byzantine Empress

Brian Croke

Between the mid-fifth and the late sixth centuries not a single male born to a Roman emperor at the imperial capital of Constantinople survived into adulthood. Yet it remained the case that only a male could hold imperial authority.<sup>1</sup> So it was during this period that the mothers, wives, daughters, and sisters of emperors rose to prominence as the real imperial power-brokers.<sup>2</sup> The most significant of them all, it will be argued here, was Ariadne Augusta (ca. 450–515) and it was during her lifetime that the role and identity of the early Byzantine empress was essentially shaped. Apart from being the spouse of two emperors, Zeno (474–491) and Anastasius (491–518), Ariadne was the daughter of one emperor (Leo I, 457–474), and the mother of another (Leo II, 471–473), not to mention the niece of yet another (Basiliscus, 475–476). In addition, of the two junior emperors or *Caesars* one (Marcus, 475) was her cousin, the other (Basiliscus/Leo, 476) was the son of another cousin. Another *Caesar*, Patricius (470–471), was at one stage her brother-in-law. An *Augusta* was now a defined position within the imperial structure and Ariadne became the most

- 
- 1 Kenneth G. Holum, *Theodosian Empresses: Women and Imperial Dominion in Late Antiquity*, TCH, vol. 3 (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1982), 1–5; Angeliki E. Laiou, “Women in Byzantine Society,” in *Women in Medieval Western European Culture*, ed. Linda Mitchell (New York: Garland Press, 1999), 161–67; M. McCormick, “The Emperor and Court,” *Cambridge Ancient History*, vol. 14, ed. Averil Cameron, Brian Ward Perkins, and Michael Whitby (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 146–48; and Liz James, “Goddess, Whore, Wife or Slave? Will the Real Byzantine Empress Please Stand Up?,” in *Queens and Queenship in Medieval Europe*, ed. Anne J. Duggan (London: Boydell and Brewer, 2002), 126–29.
  - 2 Michael McCormick, “Emperors,” in *The Byzantines*, ed. Guglielmo Cavallo (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1997), 244–47; Julia Smith, “Did Women have a Transformation of the Roman World?,” *Gender and History* 12 (2000): 536; Judith Herrin, *Unrivalled Influence: Women and Empire in Byzantium* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2013), 174–75; and Brian Croke, “Dynasty and Aristocracy in the Fifth Century,” in *Cambridge Companion to the Age of Attila*, ed. Michael Maas (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014), 103.

prominent symbol yet of the power and status that could be achieved by an early Byzantine empress.<sup>3</sup>

If Ariadne's own mother, the empress Verina, can be considered a 'lost empress' whose importance is totally underrated and understudied,<sup>4</sup> then all the more so for Ariadne herself. To date she has mainly played a bit part in most histories,<sup>5</sup> while only recently has there appeared the first, but quite inadequate, monograph dedicated to her.<sup>6</sup> Meanwhile, there has been a good deal of research on Byzantine empresses generally but without devoting any special attention to Ariadne,<sup>7</sup> even with the efflorescence of interest in the reigns of her husbands Zeno and Anastasius.<sup>8</sup> Arguably the most significant studies have been by art historians focussed on illuminating the representational dimension of her long imperial life which point to her heightened status and authority as an empress.<sup>9</sup> Despite all this work, much of it quite recent,

3 T.M. Luccelli and F. Rohr Vio, "Augustae, le donne dei principi. Riflessioni su Augustae," *Athenaeum* 100 (2012): 503.

4 James, "Goddess," 133. Cf. Laiou, "Women," 84; and M.J. Leszka, "Empress-Widow Verina's Political Activity during the Reign of Emperor Zeno," in *Mélanges d'Histoire Byzantine offerts à Oktawiusz Jurewicz à l'Occasion de son soixante-dixième Anniversaire*, ed. W. Ceran (Lódz: Wydawn Uniwersitetu Lódzkiego, 1998), 128.

5 E.g., John B. Bury, *A History of the Later Roman Empire* (London: Macmillan, 1923). More recently: A.D. Lee, *From Rome to Byzantium, AD 363 to 565* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2012), 98–99 and 159–60; and Stephen Mitchell, *A History of the Later Roman Empire, AD 284–641*, 2nd ed. (London: Wiley Blackwell, 2014), 123 and 126. Ariadne takes up less than a page of John R. Martindale, *PLRE*, vol. 2: *AD 395–527* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1980), 140–41 (Aelia Ariadne).

6 Lorenzo Magliaro, *Arianna. La garante della porpora*, Donne d'Oriente e d'Occidente (Milan: Jaca Book, 2013), preceded by the first serious scholarly article on the empress by M. Meier, "Ariadne: der 'Rote Faden' des Kaisertums," in *Augustae: Machtbewusste Frauen am römischen Kaiserhof? Herrschaftsstrukturen und Herrschaftspraxis* 11, Akten der Tagung in Zürich. 18.–20.9.2008, ed. Anne Kolb (Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 2010), 277–91.

7 Most notably by Judith Herrin whose several sophisticated studies are now collected in *Unrivalled Influence*. Note also Lynda Garland, *Women and Power in Byzantium, AD 527–1204* (London: Routledge, 1999); and Judith Herrin, *Women in Purple: Rulers of Medieval Byzantium* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2004).

8 There are several minor studies plus three major monographs: Rafal Kosinski, *The Emperor Zeno. Religion and Politics* (Cracow: Historia Iagellonica, 2010); Fiona Haarer, *Anastasius I: Politics and Empire in the Late Roman World* (Cambridge: Francis Cairns, 2006); and Mischa Meier, *Anastasios I: Die Entstehung des Byzantinischen Reiches* (Stuttgart: Kette-Cotta, 2009).

9 Liz James, *Empresses and Power in Early Byzantium* (London: Leicester University Press, 2001); Diliana Angelova, "The Ivories of Ariadne and Ideas about Female Imperial Authority in Rome and Early Byzantium," *Gesta* 43 (2004): 1–15; Anne McClanan, "The Empress Theodora and the Tradition of Women's Patronage in the Early Byzantine Empire," in *The Cultural*

Ariadne's fundamental significance remains shadowy, not least because of the patchy records for the period of her lifetime. Her role in defining the identity of an independent and influential imperial consort during her nearly sixty years in the imperial palace has never been properly formulated and credited to her. Instead, Ariadne has generally been overlooked as attention has focussed more on her successors Theodora, wife of the emperor Justinian (527–565),<sup>10</sup> and Sophia, wife of Justin II (565–578),<sup>11</sup> whereas she actually paved the way for them.

## 1 The Family of Leo

Ariadne was born about 450,<sup>12</sup> probably at Selymbria (Silivri) west of Constantinople where her father Leo, who was a senior military officer, was then stationed. Her mother Verina was in her late twenties but otherwise unknown.<sup>13</sup> Being merely the daughter of a soldier Ariadne enjoyed no

---

*Patronage of Medieval Women*, ed. J.H. McCash (Athens, Ga: Georgia University Press, 1996), 50–72; and eadem, *Representations of Early Byzantine Empresses: Image and Empire* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002); see also Carolyn Connor, *Women of Byzantium* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2004), 48–49, in the wider context of artistic patronage by imperial women.

- 10 Among the welter of literature on Theodora where she is generally treated as unique and exceptional some treatments stand out for contextualising her in terms of bias in surviving records and the significantly developed role of the empress by her predecessors: Clive Foss, "The Empress Theodora," *Byz* 72 (2002): 141–76; and Hartmut Leppin, "Theodora und Justinian," in *Die Kaiserinnen Roms. Von Livia bis Theodora*, ed. H. Temporini-Gräfin Vitzthum (Munich: C.H. Beck, 2002), 438–41. See also Pauline Allen, "Contemporary Portrayals of the Empress Theodora (AD 527–548)," in *Stereotypes of Women in Power: Historical Perspectives and Revisionist Views*, ed. Barbara Garlick, Suzanne Dixon, and Pauline Allen (New York: Greenwood Press, 1992), 93–103.
- 11 A role first highlighted by Averil Cameron, "The Empress Sophia," *Byz* 65 (1975): 5–21, reproduced in *Continuity and Change in Sixth-Century Byzantium* (London: Variorum, 1981); and Garland, *Women and Power*, 40–57.
- 12 Gereon Siebigs, *Kaiser Leo I. Das oströmische Reich in den ersten drei Jahren seiner Regierung (457–460 n. Chr.)*, vol. 1, Beiträge zur Altertumskunde, Bd 276 (Berlin and New York: Walter de Gruyter, 2010), 235 (with n.181) unnecessarily places Ariadne's birth in 455 on the strength of Marcellinus' "60 years" (*Chron.* 515.6 [Th. Mommsen, ed., *Chronica minora saec. IV. V. VI. VII*, Bd 2, MGHAA 11 [Berlin: Weidmann, 1894], 99]). He is referring to the duration of her period in the palace (*in palatio*) not her whole life.
- 13 Verina has been taken to be a woman of barbarian background but the argument is too tenuous: Siebigs, *Kaiser Leo*, 750–68.



imperial or aristocratic connection although Leo was a close associate of the powerful senior court general Aspar and possibly of Marcian, another fellow soldier who succeeded Theodosius II as emperor in the same year Ariadne was born (450). When, strongly backed by Aspar, Leo himself was chosen as emperor on the death of Marcian (457) he moved into the imperial palace at Constantinople with his wife and young daughter. Either that same year, or not long after, another daughter named Leontia was born in the palace.<sup>14</sup> In 463 a younger brother, and potential emperor, was also born but lived only a few months.<sup>15</sup> Had the young boy grown to manhood he would have become emperor in succession to Leo, and Ariadne might never have come to enjoy the power and status of an emperor's consort.<sup>16</sup> For most of the 460s Verina and her young daughters enjoyed the privileged court life with its routine of ritual, processions, banquets, and liturgies. On one occasion she met the local holy nun Matrona and sought her blessing on herself, her husband, and her young daughters.<sup>17</sup> The girls' education in Greek and Latin but also in the Scriptures took place inside the palace where they shared a common tutor.<sup>18</sup> Otherwise, the differences between the sisters in terms of age, dispositions, and predilections remain a mystery.<sup>19</sup>

At the same time, Leo was preoccupied with the politics and administration of the imperial court. In particular, he had to deal with Aspar's expectations about connecting his own family more permanently with that of the emperor through his daughters. Evidently some sort of pact between the two was settled which involved Leo promising that in due time he would marry Ariadne to Aspar's son Patricius thereby making him a likely imperial successor to Leo. As events unfolded, relations between Aspar and Leo progressively deteriorated and Leo sought to make himself less dependent on Aspar by promoting others such as his brother-in-law Basiliscus and an Isaurian named Tarasicodissa, then Zeno, who both became senior generals. As they reached marriageable age Ariadne and Leontia also had to face the challenging uncertainty of identifying a suitable husband. Ariadne will have known, for instance, the young

---

14 *PLRE* 2.667 (Leontia 1).

15 *Ibid.*, 2.664 (Leo 6).

16 Magliaro, *Arianna*, 58.

17 *Vita Prima Matronae* 32. English translation in Jeffrey Featherstone, "Life of St. Matrona of Perge," in *Holy Women of Byzantium: Ten Saints' Lives in English Translation*, ed. Alice-Mary Talbot, Byzantine Saints' Lives in Translation, vol. 1 (Washington, D.C.: Dumbarton Oaks, 1996), 13–46.

18 Magliaro, *Arianna*, 51.

19 *Ibid.*, 67.

Gothic prince Theodoric who was growing up with her in the palace,<sup>20</sup> but by the time he returned to his people in 469 she had married Zeno. At last in 470 Leo was forced to concede his original promise to Aspar, so Patricius became *Caesar* and was married not to Ariadne as originally proposed but to her younger sister Leontia. The tension between Aspar and Leo was finally released in June 471 when Leo arranged for the execution of Aspar and his sons. Patricius was allowed to escape but in doing so forfeited his marriage to Leontia. Leo now reclaimed authority for himself and his family.<sup>21</sup>

Central to Leo's method in protecting Ariadne and Leontia, while dealing with the personal and political dominance of Aspar in the 460s, was developing sources of power and influence beyond the reach of Aspar, whose adherence to the Arian affiliation put him outside the mainstream orthodoxy of the court at a time when doctrinal preference increasingly mattered. First, Leo tried but failed to have the body of Simeon Stylites relocated to Constantinople as a source of protection,<sup>22</sup> but how he and his family came to channel and control this distinctive power is highlighted by the progressive impact of Simeon's imitator, the Syriac-speaking holy man Daniel, who was set on his pillar at St Mamas (Besiktas) up the Bosphorus. Empress Verina and her daughters will have at least seen and been aware of Daniel and may have accompanied Leo on visits or separately.<sup>23</sup> This identity of the pious imperial woman had been cultivated especially by Pulcheria, daughter of Theodosius II and wife of Leo's predecessor Marcian. Leo is said to have paid special honour to Pulcheria by having her likeness placed on her tomb and by duly observing the annual liturgical commemoration of her life. In addition, he would draw attention to her picture in the imperial palace as the model of a blessed life.<sup>24</sup> Whether she liked it or not, Verina was a new Pulcheria.

20 *PLRE* 2.1078 (Theodericus 7).

21 For detailed background and interpretation see Brian Croke, "Dynasty and Ethnicity: Leo I, Zeno and the Eclipse of Aspar," *Chiron* 35 (2005): 147–201.

22 *Syriac Life of Simeon* 128 (Robert Doran, *The Lives of Simeon Stylites* [Kalamazoo: Cistercian Publications, 1992], 194).

23 *V. Dan. Styl.* 38, 46, 51, 55, 63, 65, and 92 (H. Delehaye, ed., *Les saints stylites*, Subsidia Hagiographica, vol. 14 [Brussels: Société des Bollandistes, 1923], 35, 44, 49, 54, 62, 64, and 86) (relics brought by Leo from Babylon of Ananias, Azarias, and Misael).

24 *Par.* 45 (Th. Preger, *Scriptores originum Constantinopolitanarum*, 2 vols [Leipzig: Teubner, 1901], 1.52). English translation in Averil Cameron and Judith Herrin, eds, *Constantinople in the Early Eighth Century: The Parastaseis syntomoi chronikai*, Columbia Studies in the Classical Tradition, vol. 10 (Leiden: Brill, 1984); with Holum, *Theodosian Empresses*, 227–28.

Another source of the new power of the holy at Constantinople which Ariadne experienced was the introduction into the city of relics of the Virgin Mary following her newly defined status as Mother of God (*Theotokos*) which Pulcheria had promoted in particular. Verina was responsible for the reception into Constantinople of the first Marian relic, the veil or mantle of the Virgin. She had it deposited in a newly constructed shrine of the Virgin at Blachernai, just outside the city walls along the Golden Horn. The reception of the relics at Blachernai would have given rise to a busy liturgical scene rather like that depicted on the famous Trier Ivory.<sup>25</sup> Likewise, Verina takes credit for the Virgin Church of the Chalkoprateia.<sup>26</sup> Founding, or refounding, a church in a God-dominated society such as Constantinople was a demonstration of singular power.<sup>27</sup> Such power is evident from the confused tenth-century description of an image in the Blachernai church which was set in gold and coloured mosaic. It is usually taken to be a genuine dedicatory image from the 470s depicting, as recorded

Our Lady the immaculate Mother of God seated on a throne and on either side of her Leo and Veronica [read 'Verina'], the latter holding her own son, the young emperor Leo and she falls before Our Lady the Mother of God and also their daughter Ariadne.<sup>28</sup>

If authentic, this would be the earliest visual testimony to Ariadne.

---

25 For example, see Kenneth G. Holum and Gary Vikan, "The Trier Ivory, 'Adventus' Ceremonial, and the Relics of St. Stephen," *DOP* 33 (1979): 113–33.

26 Justinian, *Nou.* 3.1 (Wilhelm Kroll, ed., *Corpus Iuris Civilis*, vol. 3: *Novellae* [Hildsheim: Weidmann, 1993], 20–21). In both cases Verina may well be the original builder despite later ascription to Pulcheria (James, "Making a Name," 65–68).

27 Laiou, "Women," 165.

28 Text in *Cod. Par. Gr.1447*, fols 257–58 with translation of Cyril Mango, *The Art of the Byzantine Empire 312–1453* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1986), 35. The problem of identification concerns the young boy said to be Ariadne's son Leo II, which may well be accurate. Often it is claimed that the young boy is the anonymous short-lived son of Leo and Verina who was perhaps called 'Leo'. If so, it is odd that Ariadne's younger sister Leontia is absent because she was born before their brother. See further: Robin Lane Fox, "The Life of Daniel," in *Portraits: Biographical Representation in the Greek and Latin Literature of the Roman Empire*, ed. Mark Edwards and S. Swain (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997), 189–90. For critical background: John Wortley, "The Marian Relics at Constantinople," *GRBS* 45 (2005): 177–83 (unduly sceptical); and Stephen J. Shoemaker, "The Cult of Fashion: The Earliest Life of the Virgin and Constantinople's Marian Relics," *DOP* 62 (2008): 53–74.

While the date of Ariadne and Zeno's marriage is disputed, it must have occurred sometime between 466 and 469,<sup>29</sup> by which time Leo would have made Zeno co-emperor were it not for local opposition.<sup>30</sup> The offspring of the marriage was a young boy named Leo after his imperial grandfather.<sup>31</sup> They had no children after Leo, that is, discounting the claim for another son,<sup>32</sup> and the subsequent tales in several languages of the two daughters, of whom one secretly left Constantinople and ended up disguised in a male monastery in Egyptian Scetis but was summoned at one stage to the capital as the one most likely to cure her younger sister.<sup>33</sup> Ariadne's sister Leontia, once freed from her short-lived marriage to Patricius, following the massacre of his family in June 471, was soon united with Marcian, son of Emperor Anthemius (467–472) and grandson of Emperor Marcian.<sup>34</sup> Marcian may well have been Leo's first choice of husband for his daughter all along, while his consulship in 472 would have reinforced his new status. Yet Leo I was the origin of the imperial authority inherited by his wife and daughters. Moreover, he was responsible for making Verina, then Ariadne, the first empresses to be financially independent, with all that flowed from that. It was during this latter part of Leo's reign that the imperial treasury, the *res priuata*, which was continually replenished and expanded through rents on imperial estates and various other taxes, was

- 
- 29 The case for 466 is made in Brian Croke, "The Imperial Reigns of Leo II," *ByzZ* 96 (2003): 561–63, with that for 468 in Rafal Kosinski, "Leo II: Some Chronological Questions," *Palamedes* 3 (2008): 210–11. Cf. Magliaro, *Arianna*, 66. The difference derives from a judgment about the reliability of chronological indicators in *V. Dan. Styl*.
- 30 Candidus, frag. 1 (R.C. Blockley, *The Fragmentary Classicising Historians of the Later Roman Empire: Eunapius, Olympiodorus, Priscus and Malchus*, 2 vols [Liverpool: F. Cairns, 1983], 2.466–67).
- 31 Again, a disputed date: *PLRE* 2.664–65 (Leo 7); and Croke, "Leo II," 559–75.
- 32 Rather than Ariadne, as sometimes claimed (e.g., by Warren Treadgold, *A History of the Byzantine State and Society* [Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1997], 158, 164, and 927 [n.6]), the solitary reference to another son, also called Zeno (Malchus, frag. 8 [Blockley, *The Fragmentary Classicising Historians*, 2.414–15]), suggests that he was born of Zeno's previous wife, Arcadia (cf. *PLRE* 2.1198 [Zeno 4]). A potential co-emperor and designated heir could be expected to have left more traces in the historical record.
- 33 Details in James Drescher, *Three Coptic Legends: Hilaria, Archellites, the Seven Sleepers* (Cairo: l'Institut français d'archéologie orientale du Caire, 1947), 69–82 (trans.). A daughter of Zeno also features in the legends related to St Menas (Ernest A.W. Budge, *Texts Relating to Saint Mena of Egypt and Canons of Nicaea in a Nubian Dialect* [London: British Museum, 1909], 44–58). Another possibility is that these were actually the daughters of Ariadne's sister Leontia and her husband Marcian (Malalas, *Chron.* 14.46 [J. Thurn, ed., *Ioannis Malalae Chronographia*, CFHB, vol. 35 [Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2000], 299.10).
- 34 *PLRE* 2.717–18 (Fl. Marcianus 17).

divided into two: one part for the emperor and his household, another for “our wife, the most serene Augusta,” and her household.<sup>35</sup> This was a most significant development which enabled Ariadne to accumulate, over the coming decades, unprecedented authority and independence for an empress.

## 2 Imperial Power of Verina and Ariadne, 465–476

By 474 Ariadne was a capable young woman who had already spent most of her life close to power and influence in the palace. With her father’s health fading, her mother Verina was keen to ensure dynastic continuity and arranged for the elevation to the throne of Ariadne’s young son and her grandson as Leo II, first as *Caesar* in November 472, then *Augustus* on 17 November 473.<sup>36</sup> Grandfather and grandson ruled together for several months. Leo then died (18 January 474) whereupon Verina was no longer an emperor’s wife but his grandmother, while the imperial daughter Ariadne now became an imperial mother and her sister Leontia an imperial aunt. This sudden but subtle shift in status and power between mother and daughters, who potentially shared equal power derived from Leo I, was to have significant ramifications. If not before, Ariadne now became an *Augusta* and acquired all the concomitant privileges of that title. Young Leo II was not himself a healthy child and not necessarily destined for a long reign. This potential threat to the power of Verina and Ariadne was clearly perceived and the optimal solution of also making Ariadne’s husband Zeno emperor soon presented itself. Leo II therefore crowned his father Zeno on 29 January 474. When young Leo II died in November 474 Ariadne’s position changed once more, from imperial mother and wife to just imperial wife, while Verina was said to be the instigator of Zeno’s enthronement but evidently soon regretted her action. Leontia’s husband Marcian, meanwhile, remained a more than eligible emperor.

35 By 472 there were separate palace officials (*decani*) and couriers for the empress (*Cod. Iust.* 12.59.10.3), with separate parts of the imperial treasury for the emperor and, referring to Ariadne, “our wife the most serene *Augusta*” (*Cod. Iust.* 10.32.64 [485–486]). Cf. “most pious *Augusta*” (*Cod. Iust.* 10.32.66 [497–498]); details in A.H.M. Jones, *The Later Roman Empire 284–602: A Social, Economic and Administrative Survey* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1964), 424–25.

36 For the dates: Croke, “Leo II,” 563–72 (*Caesar* in 472); and Kosinski, “Leo II,” 212–14 (*Caesar* in 473).

Verina, so it would seem, was keen to elevate her new lover, the *magister officiorum* Patricius, as the replacement of Zeno<sup>37</sup> but others manoeuvred in favour of her brother Basiliscus.<sup>38</sup> In any event, relations between Verina and Ariadne clearly became strained at this point. Although Ariadne and Zeno still occupied the palace, as did Verina, he was faced with an untenable position and, while absent from the city on an imperial expedition to Chalcedon across the Bosphorus, Verina took the initiative. Thereupon, Zeno fled from Chalcedon to his native Isauria. Whether Ariadne accompanied him in flight or followed later is a moot question.<sup>39</sup> Fleeing with them was a number of Isaurians at Constantinople, while substantial treasury assets were also relocated. Then, acting on the authority of an *Augusta* and as widow of Leo I, Verina had Basiliscus crowned emperor on 9 January 475 at the Hebdomon outside the city walls. The crowd acclaimed: "Long life to Verina the orthodox Helena." Verina was not just a new Pulcheria but also a new Helena, identified with the mother of Constantine as a woman of public piety and orthodoxy.<sup>40</sup> Ariadne and her mother were clearly now estranged. Basiliscus, meanwhile, fearing that Verina would opt for her lover Patricius at the first opportunity, had him killed, which instantly alienated Basiliscus from Verina and probably their nephew Armatus. Turning a blind eye to the local violence at Constantinople against Isaurians alienated the now powerful Isaurian courtier Illus, while the emperor's anti-Chalcedonian encyclical aroused the ire and action of the local people.<sup>41</sup> Within a year most of the same alliance which had conspired to force Zeno and Ariadne out of Constantinople were united in seeking to secure their rapid return.

By the end of August 476 Zeno and Ariadne formally entered Constantinople once more and reoccupied the palace, where Ariadne *Augusta* was to spend the next thirty-eight years of her life. Again she resumed the duties and position of an imperial wife. She will have supported Zeno in the proclamation as *Caesar* in the hippodrome of Armatus' son Basiliscus, also known as Leo.

37 *PLRE* 2.838–39 (Patricius 8).

38 *Ibid.*, 2.212–14 (Fl. Basiliscus 2).

39 *Marc.* 475.1 (ed. Mommsen, *MGH.AA*, XI, 91); *V. Dan. Styl.* 69 (Delehaye, *Les saints stylites*, 80); and Theophanes, *Chron.* AM 5967 (Carl Gotthard de Boor, ed., *Theophanis Chronographia*, 2 vols [Leipzig: Teubner, 1883–1885], 1.120.29–30).

40 *Par.* 29 (Preger, *Scriptores*, 1.37). On the enduring significance of Helena as an imperial example see Leslie Brubaker, "Memories of Helena: Patterns of Matronage in the Fourth and Fifth Centuries," in *Women, Men and Eunuchs: Gender in Byzantium*, ed. Liz James (London: Routledge, 1997), 52–75.

41 M. Redies, "Die Usurpation des Basiliskos (475–6) im Kontext der aufstiegenderen mono-physischen Kirche," *AnTard* 5 (1997): 211–21.

Zeno soon grew suspicious of Armatus and had him murdered in the Kochlias, the narrow staircase leading from the palace up to the hippodrome. Ariadne, however, capitalising on her own authority, protected the young Basiliscus by getting him ordained and smuggled out of the city. The former *Caesar* lived well into the reign of Justinian and the story of his background as a relative of Ariadne became confused with that of her son Leo II.<sup>42</sup>

Even now Zeno and Ariadne were not fully secure on the throne. In 479 another rebellion was afoot. This time it involved not Ariadne's mother but her sister Leontia. Ariadne might be the current empress, but her sister considered her claim superior because she was 'born in the purple', that is while her father Leo I was actually emperor. In the raging battle at Constantinople Marcian almost succeeded in replacing Zeno who had been driven back to the safety of the palace where he stood firm, doubtless reinforced by Ariadne, as Theodora was to do for Justinian during the Nika riots in 532. Outside, Marcian was opposed by Illus and his forces arriving from Chalcedon and his coup failed at the last minute, whereupon he took to the high ground and the sanctuary of the Church of the Holy Apostles. He was later removed from there, forcibly ordained a priest by Patriarch Acacius, and exiled to Cappadocia, later to Isauria.<sup>43</sup> By then Leontia had joined him.<sup>44</sup> Verina too was in exile in Isauria, having incurred the wrath of Illus the previous year (478), and she evidently backed and encouraged Leontia's claim<sup>45</sup>. In using his wife so blatantly in the contest for power Marcian highlights the very significance of female imperial power whose limits were now being tested,<sup>46</sup> but enjoyed alone at Constantinople by Ariadne *Augusta*.

42 Brian Croke, "Basiliscus the Boy Emperor," *GRBS* 24 (1983): 81–91, reproduced in Brian Croke, *Christian Chronicles and Byzantine History, 5th–6th Centuries* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 1992).

43 Theodore Lector, *Hist. eccl.* 419–20 (G.C. Hansen, ed., *Theodorus Anagnostes Kirchengeschichte*, GCS, n.F. 3, 2nd ed [Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1995], 116.10–19).

44 John of Antioch, frag. 303 (Umberto Roberto, ed., *Ioannis Antiocheni Fragmenta ex Historia chronica. Introduzione, edizione critica e traduzione*, TU, vol. 154 [Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2005], 516–17).

45 Idem, frag. 303.38 (Roberto, *Ioannis Antiocheni*, 514).

46 Gilbert Dagron, *Emperor and Priest: The Official Office in Byzantium* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 43.



### 3 Ariadne as Empress, 476–491

By now, Illus had put himself in an unassailable position because he held, as hostages in Isauria, Ariadne's mother (Verina), sister (Leontia), and brothers-in-law (Marcian and Longinus). Yet, Ariadne was not dissuaded from standing up to Illus. She had recent first-hand knowledge of the life of an exile in the mountainous cold of Isauria, so sometime in 480, on receipt of a begging letter from her mother which doubtless complained about the trials of her Isaurian exile, Ariadne pressured Zeno to have Verina restored to Constantinople. "Ask the patrician Illus about her," was the emperor's reply. Summoning Illus to her presence, as an empress could do, she made her tearful petition. The enigmatic reply of Illus, "You are seeking to make another emperor instead of your husband," only infuriated Ariadne further. Whether or not Illus was insinuating that Ariadne had a preferred alternative to Zeno is unclear. In any event, it underscores the power of an *Augusta* by 480 to make and unmake an emperor even if she was not otherwise actively involved in imperial decisions and deliberations.

Ariadne remained a risky suspect to Illus who denounced her to his close friend the emperor Zeno whose response was to authorise his wife's assassination in the separate palace quarters where she lived. Relations between Ariadne and her husband had never been good but this was clearly a point of no return. Still, the empress retained the independence of her own financial resources, household, and loyal staff and so now avoided her fate by substituting the chambermaid for herself in her bed then fled to Patriarch Acacius for refuge. Zeno, presuming he was now a widower, went into mourning only to be interrupted by the patriarch seeking security for the empress' safety. Ariadne sought immediate vengeance on Illus with an ultimatum: "Either Illus stays in the palace or I do," to which Zeno replied, "I want you. If you can do anything to him, do it."<sup>47</sup> So Ariadne now had no compunction in resolving on cold-blooded murder. Through the bed-chamberlain Urbicius she organised for the assassination of Illus, now conscious that he had also planned to do away with her, if he could.<sup>48</sup>

In the confused and bungled attempt on Illus' life, as he was processing through the Kochlias, the same narrow staircase where Armatus was cut down

47 Malalas, *Chron.* 15.13 (CFHB 35.311.\*30–\*32): και λοιπὸν ἡ Αριάδνη εἶπε τῷ Ζήνωνι "ἢ Ἰλλοῦς ἐστὶν εἰς τὸ παλάτιον, ἢ ἐγώ." ὁ δὲ Ζήνων λέγει ὅτι "εἴ τι δύνη, πράξον. ἐγὼ σὲ θέλω."; and Jordanes, *Rom.* 349–51 (Th. Mommsen, ed., *Iordanis Romana et Getica*, MGHAA, Bd 5/1, 2nd ed. [Berlin: Weidmann, 2005], 45). Cf. *PLRE* 2.586–90 (Illus 1).

48 Kosinski, *Zeno*, 126–27.



in 476, he escaped with just a severed ear. Shortly after, Illus excused himself from the imperial capital, was made *magister militum per Orientem* and relocated with imperial sanction to Antioch. From there he had easier access to his native Isauria and the Cilician coast. Through this whole episode Ariadne had shown herself an independent woman of strength and steely calmness, feared by both her husband Zeno and the most powerful court officials. She had also demonstrated a far more ruthless streak than her husband,<sup>49</sup> and had achieved what Verina could not, namely, the banishment of Illus from Constantinople and his powerbase at the imperial court. Zeno himself clearly distrusted Illus by now, doubtless fuelled by Ariadne, and when Illus refused to release Zeno's brother Longinus the emperor stripped him of his position and installed a new general at Antioch, John the Scythian.<sup>50</sup>

In 484, knowing Calandion the bishop of Antioch stood behind him and against Zeno because of his unpopular *Henotikon* decree,<sup>51</sup> Illus rebelled. Zeno was then forced to send the *magister militum per Thraciam* Leontius with an army to confront Illus, but Leontius was persuaded to change sides and agreed to be nominated as emperor himself. The imperial coronation was only made possible by the authority of Verina who was escorted from her exile in Cherris to Tarsus where, however unwillingly, she proclaimed the new emperor on 19 July 484. In her rescript to the Antiochenes and other provincial capitals authenticating her choice of emperor she wrote:

The Augusta Verina to our governors and Christ-loving people, greetings. You know that the empire is ours and that after the death of my husband Leo, we appointed as emperor Trasakalissaios, subsequently called Zeno, so that our dominion would be improved. But now seeing that the state is being carried backwards as a result of his insatiate desire, we have decided that it was necessary to crown for you a Christian emperor embellished by piety and justice so that he may save the affairs of the state and that wars be stilled. We have crowned the most pious Leontius as emperor of the Romans who will reward you all with his providence.<sup>52</sup>

49 Cf. Magliaro, *Arianna*, 117–18.

50 *PLRE* 2.602 (Ioannes Scythia 34).

51 Evagrius, *Hist. eccl.* 3.16 (J. Bidez and L. Parmentier, eds, *The Ecclesiastical History of Evagrius with the Scholia* [London: Methuen, 1898], 114–15).

52 Malalas, *Chron.* 15.13 (CFHB 35.314.\*18–\*29): Αἰλία βηρίνα ἢ αἰεὶ Αὐγούστα Ἀντιοχεύσι πολίταις ἡμετέροις. ἴστε, ὅτι τὸ βασιλεῖον μετὰ τὴν ἀποβίωσιν Λέοντος τοῦ τῆς λήξεως ἐστίν. προεχειρισάμεθα δὲ βασιλέα Στρακωδίσσεων τὸν μετὰ ταῦτα κληθέντα Ζήνωνα, ὥστε τὸ ὑπήκοον βελτιωθῆναι καὶ πάντα τὰ στρατιωτικὰ τάγματα. ὁρώσι νῦν τὴν πολιτείαν ἅμα τῷ

These were potent claims, eclipsing those of Pulcheria in appointing Marcian in 450, and they had been reinforced by her earlier proclamation of her brother Basiliscus (475) and her backing for the usurpation of her son-in-law Marcian (479).<sup>53</sup> That Ariadne retained and augmented her power in the face of clear provocation and political insecurity on all these occasions can be attributed, at least partly, to her own personal resolution and capability. Ariadne knew her way around the corridors of power, and her relations with court and army sustained her. If Zeno now wavered, as in 479, she was not for turning.

In the end, Leontius' usurpation had all the hallmarks of a narrow and hastily assembled rebellion rather than a calculated plan on the part of Illus which had been years in the making.<sup>54</sup> Defeated by Zeno's army near Antioch in September 484, they retreated once more into Isauria to the fort of Cherris-Papyrion, then were blockaded by the Roman army for four years before being captured and beheaded.<sup>55</sup> Ariadne perhaps gazed upon the grisly sight of the heads of Leontius and Illus which were paraded around the hippodrome on poles as a victory procession before being taken across to Sykai for public spectacle.<sup>56</sup> Meanwhile Ariadne had not seen her mother for years and was never to see her again. However, she knew from her example and position that an imperial wife and widow was now a key repository of political power and influence. Verina had died in exile in 484 and her body was transported to Constantinople only in 488 where Ariadne will have played a key role in her burial in the Church of the Holy Apostles.<sup>57</sup> Since 484, the mantle of Verina, the supreme authority of an *Augusta*, now lay on Ariadne's shoulders.

---

ὕπηκόω κατόπιν φερομένην ἐκ τῆς αὐτοῦ ἀπληστίας ἀναγκαῖον ἡγησάμεθα. βασιλέα ὑμῖν στέψαι εὐσεβῆ διακαίσιον ἡγετοῦν, ἵνα τὰ τῆς Ῥωμαϊκῆς πολιτείας περισώσῃ πράγματα καὶ τὸ πολέμιον ἤσυχον ἄξει, τοὺς δὲ ὑπηκόους ἅπαντας μετὰ τῶν νόμων διαφυλάξῃ ἐστέψαμεν Λεόντιον τὸν εὐσεβέστατον, ὅς πάντας ὑμᾶς προνοίας ἀξιώσει. Slightly fuller in Theophanes, *Chron.* AM 5974 (de Boor, *Theophanes*, 1.129.11–21) with translation of Cyril Mango and Roger Scott, *Theophanes*, 198.

53 Laiou, "Women," 165.

54 The subtle but ultimately unlikely case made by A. Kiel-Freytag, "Betrachtungen zur Usurpation des Illus und des Leontius (484–488 n.Chr.)," *ZPE* 174 (2010): 291–301.

55 *PLRE* 2.670–71 (Leontius 17). The details of the campaign against Leontius and Illus in 484 followed by their retreat to Papyrion are uniquely found in the local history of Joshua the Stylite (pseudo-Joshua, *Chronicle* 13–17 [English translation in Frank R. Trombley and John W. Watt, *The Chronicle of Pseudo-Joshua the Stylite*, TTH, vol. 32 (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2000), 12–16]).

56 Malalas, *Chron.* 15.14 (CFHB 35.315.64–66).

57 John of Antioch, frag. 306 (Roberto, *Ioannis Antiocheni*, 526 105–107).

## 4 Ariadne and Anastasius, 491–515

When Zeno died on 9 April 491 there was a clear expectation that, as *Augusta*, Ariadne would properly take charge of proceedings, as Verina had done in 484. On the evening of 10 April she summoned to the palace the leading imperial officials and senators along with the city's patriarch, Euphemius. Meanwhile the soldiers and the people of Constantinople, with the circus factions all in their appropriate places, had gathered in the hippodrome to await news of a successor but also to guarantee an outcome.<sup>58</sup> As part of this reception Ariadne assured them that "even before your requests we gave a command to the most glorious office-holders and the sacred senate with the common consent of the most noble, to choose a man who is Christian, Roman, and endowed with every imperial virtue."<sup>59</sup> They replied by insisting the choice of emperor belonged to Ariadne. Her chosen emperor Anastasius was required to swear an oath that he would not use his new position to harbour grudges against those with whom he had previous dealings and that he would rule conscientiously. It was presumably at this stage of the process that Ariadne insisted with Patriarch Euphemius that an oath of adherence to Chalcedonian orthodoxy also be solicited from Anastasius and deposited in the patriarchal archives.<sup>60</sup>

58 For the accession of Anastasius: R.J. Lillie, "Die Krönung des Kaisers Anastasios I (491)," *Byzantinoslavica* 56 (1995): 3–12; Dagron, *Emperor and Priest*, 65–68; Haarer, *Anastasios*, 1–6; and Meier, *Anastasios*, 63–75. V. Dan. Styl. 91 (Delehaye, *Les saints stylites*, 86) reports hearing Daniel prophesy that after Zeno's death Ariadne would reign over the empire in conjunction with Anastasius.

59 Constantine Porphyrogenetos, *De caer.* 92 (English translation in Ann Moffatt and Maxene Tall, *Constantine Porphyrogenetos: The Book of Ceremonies, with the Greek edition of the Corpus Scriptorum Historiae Byzantinae [Bonn, 1929]*, 2 vols, ByzAus, vol. 18 [Canberra: Australian Association for Byzantine Studies, 2012], 418–19): ὅτι καὶ τῶν ὑμετέρων αἰτήσεων ἐκελεύσαμεν τοῖς ἐνδοξοτάτοις ἀρχουσι καὶ τῇ ἱερᾷ συγκλήτῳ μετὰ κοινῆς τῶν γενναιοτάτων δοκιμασίας ἄνδρα ἐπιλέξασθαι Χριστιανὸν Ῥωμαῖον καὶ πάσης γέμοντα βασιλικῆς ἀρετῆς. The detailed record of these events was set down by Peter the Patrician in the sixth-century and copied in the tenth-century *De ceremoniis* for Emperor Constantine VII Porphyrogenitus. Note that for "esteemed/highly esteemed archons" the words "glorious/most glorious office-holders" have been substituted to reflect more accurately the technical titulature of the original *eudoxos/eudoxotatos* or *gloriosus/gloriosissimus*, while sixth-century use of 'archon' is translatable as 'office-holder'.

60 Theodore Lector, *Hist. eccl.* 447 (GCS n.F. 3.125.26–126.15); Evagrius, *Hist. eccl.* 3.32 (Bidez and Parmentier, *The Ecclesiastical History*, 130–1); and Victor of Tunnuna, *Chron.* s.v. 491.1 (MGHAA 11.191–92), with Rafal Kosinski, "Euphemios, Patriarch of Constantinople in the Years 490–496," *JbOB* 62 (2012): 66–69.

Anastasius' relatively lowly official position made him an unexpected choice of emperor. He was the head of the imperial 'silentaries', those who serve the court as officials responsible for regulating access to the imperial presence and preserving its dignified silence. Obviously contemporaries had to explain Ariadne's choice for themselves. The one person expected to succeed Zeno was Longinus his brother and the brother-in-law of Ariadne.<sup>61</sup> She will have been sensitive to the mood of the city and court that another Isaurian emperor, especially the brother of Zeno, could not be countenanced so Longinus was quickly despatched, along with his family.<sup>62</sup> This was no less than the bold act of a powerful empress. Other senior generals, as Marcian had been in 450, as well as current and former imperial officials and senators, might also have seen themselves as the next emperor. Rumours therefore swirled, including that Anastasius had long been Ariadne's secret lover,<sup>63</sup> perhaps as Patricius is said to have been for Ariadne's mother Verina. The fact remains that Anastasius proved to be more than a competent emperor despite periodic opposition and revolts generated by his ecclesiastical and economic actions. Both Ariadne and the imperial bed-chamberlain Urbicius had already spent decades in the imperial palace and clearly understood that Anastasius would make a good emperor, a deliberate and adroit choice. Indeed, the imperial power and influence overtly wielded by Ariadne (Zeno in 474, Anastasius in 491) and later Sophia (Tiberius in 578), as the maker of emperors following the earlier example of Pulcheria in 450 and Verina in 475 and 484, arguably raises them above Theodora.

It was as an imperial widow and *Augusta* that Ariadne selected Anastasius to be emperor and participated in his installation on 11 April 491. Only a month later did she marry him. While Ariadne was around forty years of age at the time, Anastasius was in his early sixties. If she had a precedent for her actions it was the example of Pulcheria in 450 who selected Marcian as emperor before they celebrated their nuptials. Ariadne may have been very conscious of this herself if that is the explanation for the commemorative gold coinage struck to celebrate the occasion. 'FELICITER NUBTIIS' was the legend, and its iconographical pattern was clearly modelled on the similar one which commemorated the

---

61 Evagrius, *Hist. eccl.* 3.29 (Bidez and Parmentier, *The Ecclesiastical History*, 125).

62 Haarer, *Anastasius*, 24, n.72.

63 Pseudo-Zachariah of Mytilene, *Hist. eccl.* 7.1 (Ernest W. Brooks, ed., *Historia ecclesiastica Zachariae Rhetori uulgo adscripta*, 2 vols, CSCO, vols 83–84 = CSCO *Scriptores Syri*, vols 38–39 [Leuven: L. Durbecq, 1919–1921], 2.17–20), with Haarer, *Anastasius*, 4.

union of Pulcheria and Marcian.<sup>64</sup> On this coin the bride and groom, dressed in full imperial regalia, stand either side of Christ who blesses and symbolises the sanctity of their union. Yet, it is only Ariadne who wears the full imperial crown with hanging *prepondoulia*, which is thought to represent the fact that in effecting this union she is the more powerful one because the bridegroom is her choice.<sup>65</sup> The marriage of Ariadne and Anastasius will also have produced a marriage ring to be passed out as gifts to courtiers and aristocrats. None survives, unless the one discovered at Trebizond (now in Dumbarton Oaks) in the same treasure as the marriage *solidus* represents Ariadne and Anastasius.<sup>66</sup> In that case the difference in imperial costume between Ariadne (crowned) and Anastasius (not crowned) is even starker.<sup>67</sup> The coin, combined with the ring, produced in 491 for the new imperial marriage were part of the propaganda immediately promoting the stability and continuity of imperial power enabled through Ariadne.

Following her key role in the accession of Emperor Anastasius and her subsequent marriage to him, Ariadne largely disappears from view for over a decade. While the emperor and his court, including a relative of Ariadne,<sup>68</sup> were focussed on a protracted war with the rebels in Isauria (492–498), then a more extensive engagement against the Persians on the imperial frontier (502–505), Ariadne remained actively occupied in the life of the court and the city. The daily routine and ritual of an imperial life make less impact on the subsequent record than the wars and riots of the reign. It is not necessarily true that, in contrast to her role with Zeno, she was now deliberately shunning

64 Arthur Bellinger, *Catalogue of the Byzantine Coins in the Dumbarton Oaks Collection and in the Whittemore Collection: Anastasius I to Maurice, 491–602* (Washington, D.C.: Dumbarton Oaks, 1992), 4; and W. Hahn, "Die Münzprägung für Aelia Ariadne," *Byzantios: Festschrift für Herbert Hunger*, ed. W. Hörandner et al. (Vienna: E. Becvar, 1984), 101–106.

65 A. Walker, "Numismatic and Metrological Parallels for the Iconography of Early Byzantine Marriage Jewellery. The Question of the Crowned Bride," *Travaux et Mémoires* 16 (2010): 852–55. Cf. Leslie Brubaker and H. Tobler, "The Gender of Money: Byzantine Empresses on Coins (324–802)," *Gender and History* 12 (2000): 851–52.

66 Marvin C. Ross, S.R. Zwirn, and S.A. Boyd, *Catalogue of the Byzantine and Early Medieval Antiquities in the Dumbarton Oaks Collection: Jewellery, Enamels, and Art of the Migration Period*, vol. 2 (Washington, D.C.: Dumbarton Oaks, 2005), 56–57 (item number 66).

67 Walker, "Parallels," 857.

68 John Malalas, *Chron.* 16.3 (CFHB 35.320.29), mentions in passing that Anastasius' general Diogenianus was a "relative of the Augusta." Precisely how they were related is very unclear. That he first appears in 492 and was still a senior general thirty years later (*PLRE* 2.362 [Diogenianus 4]) suggests he was of the next generation to Ariadne. If so, he was perhaps the husband of one of her nieces, daughters of Leontia and Marcian.

the limelight.<sup>69</sup> Certainly she was associated with the emperor as a target of hostile opposition in Constantinople in 493 when, according to an eye-witness, “statues of the emperor and the empress were bound with ropes and dragged through the city” by the violent crowd.<sup>70</sup> It was also somewhere in this period that she proposed to her husband that the patrician Anthemius be made praetorian prefect, an offer steadfastly rejected by the emperor on the dubious grounds of insufficient education,<sup>71</sup> just as Theodora was rebuffed by Justinian in objecting to his restoration of John the Cappadocian in 532. Anthemius was the son of an emperor himself and his brother Marcian had been married to Ariadne’s sister Leontia. Even though he was part of Marcian’s unsuccessful revolt against Zeno in 479 after which he fled to Rome, Anthemius remained loyal to Ariadne and Anastasius, becoming consul at an advanced age in the year of Ariadne’s death (515).<sup>72</sup> Indeed, her image appears on his now lost consular diptych.<sup>73</sup> Anastasius and Ariadne were also responsible for the construction or reconstruction of a Church of St Euphemia in Petra at Constantinople which does not survive although one can imagine the dedication and its inscriptional record.<sup>74</sup> Other churches attributed to Anastasius and Ariadne as joint dedications are those of St Michael the Archangel in the Nea,<sup>75</sup> and the Forty Martyrs near the Baths of Constantine, near the bronze tetrapylon,<sup>76</sup> plus the church of Elias attributed to Ariadne and Zeno.<sup>77</sup> For Ariadne, as for Pulcheria and Verina before her and Theodora afterwards, church building symbolised not only her piety but also her political power and patronage consolidated by her association with Anastasius.<sup>78</sup>

69 As suggested by Meier, *Anastasios*, 311.

70 Marcellinus, *Chron.* 493.1 (MGHAA 11.94). Perhaps one of them, later replaced where it had originally stood, was the full-length statue of Ariadne which was still located near the palace entrance in the eighth century (*Par.* 32 and 80 (Preger, *Scriptores*, 1.38.5 and 1.70.13).

71 John Lydus, *De mag.* 3.50 (Richard Wünsch, ed., *Ioannis Lydi. De magistratibus populi Romani libri tres* [Leipzig: Teubner, 1903], 139), with Meier, *Anastasios*, 120.

72 Assuming that *PLRE* 2.98 (Anthemius 5) and 99 (Procopius Anthemius 9) are the same person.

73 Richard Delbrueck, *Dittici consolari tardoantichi*, ed. Marilena Abbatepaolo (Bari: Edipuglia 2009), 217–19.

74 Details in Raymond Janin, *La géographie ecclésiastique de l'Empire byzantine*, vol. 1/3 (Paris: Institut français d'études byzantines, 1969), 126–27.

75 *Pat.* 3.181 (Th. Preger, *Scriptores originum Constantinopolitanarum*, 2 vols [Leipzig: Teubner, 1901–1907], 2.272.11).

76 *Ibid.*, 3.55 (Preger, *Scriptores*, 2.236.15).

77 *Pat.* 3.66 (Preger, *Scriptores*, 2.239.17–240.2), with Janin, *Géographie ecclésiastique*, 137–38.

78 James, “Making a Name,” 66.

Of particular interest is Ariadne's involvement in ecclesiastical matters. Through the theologically turbulent period of the reign of her husband Zeno, and despite his failed attempt at unity through his *Henotikon* decree in 482, which simply avoided mention of Chalcedon, she remained a firm Chalcedonian. Even the challenge of Anastasius who was increasingly seen as having anti-Chalcedonian sympathies, if not an outright Monophysite agenda, did not cause her to waver. The oath which she and Euphemius made Anastasius take on his inauguration was constantly under pressure in the fraught relations between emperor and patriarch culminating in the exile of Euphemius in 496 on a trumped up charge of colluding with the Isaurian enemy.<sup>79</sup> Ariadne must have been pained by this but would remain loyal to her husband, just as she was on Friday 22 July 511 when we catch a glimpse of her at the Hebdomon where the imperial couple were then in summer residence. On this occasion, probably at the Church of John the Baptist, Euphemius' patriarchal successor Macedonius had evidently aroused the concerns of the empress sufficiently enough for her to join Anastasius in refusing to take communion from the patriarch's hand.<sup>80</sup> The estrangement between Macedonius and Anastasius was now irreconcilable and the patriarch was exiled one night the following week (7 August 511).

The replacement of Patriarch Macedonius by Timothy was not well received at Constantinople where religious tension was regularly provoked by the orthodox monks agitating against the policies of Anastasius and his increasing support for the enemies of Chalcedon in the city and elsewhere. A decree requiring the controversial clause "who was crucified for us" to be added to the Trishagion prayer in all churches so infuriated the people that they rioted over five days (4–8 November 512). The porticoes from the palace to the Forum of Constantine were destroyed and the people were eventually pacified by the hippodrome appearance of the emperor in a gesture of humility and defeat.<sup>81</sup> When Anastasius' imperial tenure was threatened he sought refuge in the Blachernai church. Ariadne considered this act degrading and

79 Jitse Dijkstra and Geoffrey Greatrex, "Patriarchs and Politics in Constantinople in the Reign of Anastasius (with a re-edition of *O.Mon.Epiph.*59)," *Millennium* 6 (2009): 227–30; Kosinski, "Euphemius," 72–78.

80 Pseudo-Zachariah of Mitylene, *Hist. eccl.* 7.8 (CSCO Scriptorum Syri 39.41–48); with Dijkstra and Greatrex, "Patriarchs and Politics," 230–64 (quoting contemporary letters of Severus); and Geoffrey Greatrex, "The Fall of Macedonius Reconsidered," in *Studia Patristica*, vol. 44, ed. J. Baun, A. Cameron, M. Edwards, and M. Vinzent, papers presented at the 15th International Conference on Patristic Studies, Oxford 2007 (Leuven: Peeters, 2010), 125–29.

81 Meier, *Anastasios*, 269–88.



abused her husband for causing such harm to the orthodox Christians.<sup>82</sup> On this occasion, politically secure and independent, she was clearly on the side of the emperor's opponents.

Ariadne died some time in 515 and was buried in a casket of Aquitanian marble in the imperial mausoleum at the Church of the Holy Apostles with Anastasius laid to rest beside her when he died aged 90 in August 518.<sup>83</sup> Marcellinus, who then lived in the city, noted that she had spent "sixty years in the palace" (58 to be exact) while a later church history recorded that she "administered the empire" for forty years (41 to be exact) as the wife of Zeno, then Anastasius.<sup>84</sup> The so-called *Oracle of Baalbek* produced around 503/4 predicted her own "power and dynasty" would endure for 52 years (to 526 to be exact).<sup>85</sup> Only a couple of years before Ariadne's death a local grammarian Priscian delivered a panegyric on behalf of the emperor Anastasius in which he said of Ariadne that, "She has achieved more than her sex allowed her to do."<sup>86</sup> This was another clear signal to Priscian's Constantinopolitan audience and to posterity that Ariadne had broken new ground for a Roman empress.

## 5 Ariadne as *Augusta*

Except for Verina briefly, Ariadne was effectively the first empress capable of operating independently with her own finances, staff, and imperial quarters which she consolidated over a forty-year period as *Augusta*. Her brittle relationship with her older husband Zeno, which gave rise to the rumour of her having him killed,<sup>87</sup> and apparent distance from the even older Anastasius

82 Theodore Lector, *Hist. eccl.* 508 (GCS n.F. 3.144.24–145.19); and Theophanes, *Chron.* AM 6005 (de Boor, *Theophanes*, 1.159.18–19).

83 Philip Grierson, "The Tombs and Obits of the Byzantine Emperors (337–1042); With an Additional Note by Philip Grierson, Cyril Mango and Ihor Ševčenko," *DOP* 16 (1962): 45.

84 Pseudo-Zacharias of Mitylene, *Hist. eccl.* 7.13 (CSCO Scriptorum Syri 39.57): ἡ ἀρχὴ τῆς βασιλείας.

85 Paul Alexander, *The Oracle of Baalbek: The Tiburtine Sybil in Greek Dress* (Washington D.C.: Dumbarton Oaks, 1967), 18 (text: line 148), 27 (trans.), 42–3 (date), and 82–4. Cf. 140 (discussion).

86 Priscian, *Pan. Anast.* 307 (P. Coyne, ed., *Priscian of Caesarea's De laude Anastasii imperatoris* [Lewiston, N.Y.: E. Mellen Press, 1991], 51): "plus fecit quam quod sexus concesserat illi."

87 What appears legendary is the later story of how Ariadne arranged for her husband to be buried alive in the coffin designated for him then ignored his cries for help (Zonaras, *Epit.* 14.2.23–3.5 [M. Piner and Theodor Büttner-Wobst, ed., *Ioannis Zonarae. Annales*, 3 vols, CSHB, vols 47, 48, and 49 (Bonn: Weber, 1841–1897), 3.132–33]; and George Kedrenos, *Hist.* [Immanuel Bekker, ed., *Georgius Cedrenus. Ioannis Scylitzae Ope*, 2 vols, CSHB, vols 8 and



contributed further to her independence as an empress and to the institutionalisation of supportive structures and protocol, as did the chasm between Ariadne and her husbands in terms of religious belief and practice. The Antiochene patriarch Severus who had known her while in Constantinople in recent years explained to his congregation that former empresses had usually concentrated on themselves and their passions. Ariadne, however, was different: she was actually ruling jointly with Anastasius in a collaboration bestowed by God.<sup>88</sup> Yet, she remained a firm Chalcedonian at a time of intense pressure to conform to an imperial policy which favoured compromise through Zeno's *Henotikon* and Anastasius' overt support for anti-Chalcedonian bishops such as Severus, thereby arousing popular animosity and opposition at Constantinople. We see this resolute independence of Ariadne clearly in the visit of the Palestinian holy man Sabas to the imperial court in 511 including to the separate quarters of the empress. She assured him of adherence to the decisions of the Council of Chalcedon and asserted her orthodoxy. Sabas then blessed her and "exhorted her to hold firmly onto the faith of her father the great emperor the sainted Leo," whereupon she replied to him, "You speak well, venerable father, as there is One who hears us."<sup>89</sup> For decades Ariadne was the core element ensuring continuity at court of orthodox belief while Zeno and Anastasius were kept at the doctrinal margins. So, the much vaunted doctrinal difference between Justinian (Chalcedonian) and his empress Theodora (anti-Chalcedonian) in the next generation had a notable recent precedent.

Although the literary records for Ariadne's life are relatively scant and fragmentary, the independent role of the empress as co-ruler is represented in various ways in the iconography of this period. A large number of portrait statues of Ariadne survive which may be explained by her authority and longevity,<sup>90</sup>

---

9 (Bonn: Weber, 1838–1839), 1.621.24–622.24]). This tale originated in later Chalcedonian polemic against Zeno, as explained by Lawrence I. Conrad, "Zeno the Epileptic Emperor: Historiography and Polemics as Sources of Realia," *Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies* 24 (2000): 61–81.

88 Severus, *Homily* 24 (16 May 513) (M. Brière and F. Graffi, eds, *Les Homiliae cathedrales de Sévère d'Antioche. Homélie XVIII à XXV*, PO, vol. 37/1 [Turnhout: Brepols, 1975], 143).

89 *V.Sab.* 53 (Eduard Schwartz, ed., *Kyrrillos von Skythopolis*, TU, Bd 49 2 Heft [Leipzig: J.C. Hinrich, 1939], 145.1–5): Οὕτως ἐξεληθὼν ἀπὸ τοῦ βασιλέως ὁ πρεσβύτερος εἰσῆλθεν πρὸς τὴν ἀγούσταν Ἀρεάδην καὶ εὐλογήσας αὐτὴν παρεκάλει ἀντιλαβέσθαι τῆς τοῦ ἐν ἁγίοις πατρὸς αὐτῆς Λέοντος τοῦ μεγάλου βασιλέως πίστεως. καὶ λέγει αὐτῷ ἐκείνη καλῶς λέγεις, καλόγηρε, ἐὰν ἔστιν ὁ ἀκούων. English translation in Richard M. Price, *Cyrril of Scythopolis: Lives of the Monks of Palestine*, Cistercian Studies (Kalamazoo: Cistercian Publications, 1991), 154.

90 Itemised in Elizabeth Alföldi-Rosenbaum, "Portrait Bust of a Young Lady of the Time of Justinian," *Metropolitan Museum Journal* 1 (1968): 25–27.

while coins show that she extended the female *basileia*.<sup>91</sup> She was the first empress not to have a crowning hand of God on her gold *solidi*,<sup>92</sup> for instance, but she was the last empress to be depicted on them altogether.<sup>93</sup> Theodora never appears on Justinian's coinage. For the first time, however, an empress is portrayed with the emperor on consular diptychs such as that of Clementinus in 513 where the separate but equal clipeate images of Ariadne and Anastasius point to her role in the imperial hierarchy as a co-ruler, as emphasised by Severus in 513, with a status above that of a consul.<sup>94</sup> Not only did she confer legitimacy on Anastasius but also on the annual consuls. Indeed, the indivisible imperial power deriving from Ariadne continued after her death in 515 to the end of Anastasius' reign three years later. Representations of Ariadne on diptychs for 517, for example, are a posthumous sign of her legitimation of both the emperor and the consuls.<sup>95</sup>

Ariadne may also be the empress depicted alone in a palatial setting on two renowned extant ivories.<sup>96</sup> In each of these we see an empress wearing the *chlamys* over the right shoulder which is fastened with a jewelled *fibula*. She has a bejewelled diadem on her head and holds a cross and sceptre. The necklaces and pendentives are distinctly imperial.<sup>97</sup> While these two ivories may not in fact have been for Ariadne there would probably have been similar ones with the emperor on the other leaf of the diptych, again displaying

91 McClanan, *Representations*, 92; Philip Grierson and Melinda Mays, *Catalogue of Late Roman Coins in the Dumbarton Oaks Collection and in the Whittemore Collection: From Arcadius and Honorius to the Accession of Anastasius* (Washington D.C.: Dumbarton Oaks, 1994), 176 and 410.

92 John Kent, "The Empress Ariadne: What's in a Name?," *Nordisk Numismatisk Arsskrift/Nordic Numismatic Journal* 51 (1991): 35.

93 James, *Empresses and Power*, 109.

94 McClanan *Representations*, 71 and 185; Angelova, "Ivories of Ariadne," 8–10; and James, *Empresses and Power*, 135–36, but doubted by Eileen Rubery, "The Vienna 'Empress' Ivory and its Companion in Florence: Crowned in Different Glories?," in *Wonderful Things. Byzantium through its Art*, ed. Antony Eastmond and Liz James (London: Ashgate, 2013), 109.

95 McClanan, *Representations*, 81–82; and Cecilia Olovdotter, "Representing Consulship," *Opuscula* 4 (2011): 112.

96 One in Florence (Bargello), one in Vienna (Kunsthistorisches Museum) with details in James, *Empresses and Power*, 136–45, arguing that both ivories may not represent the same empress and neither may be Ariadne (but cf. James, "Goddess," 130). In favour of Ariadne: Magliaro, *Arianna*, 73; and Rubery, "Vienna Ivory," 99–114 (same empress but different phases of her public life).

97 Angelova "Ivories of Ariadne," 4.

their co-rulership.<sup>98</sup> The name of the empress does not appear on any of these images because none was required anymore. By now, certainly for a contemporary audience, the identity of the empress was stylistically self-evident.<sup>99</sup>

In summary, through the fifth century women became more powerful and prominent at the imperial court, first as the wives, mothers, sisters and daughters of emperors then in their own right. Ariadne embodied and extended this transition. Indeed, none of the early Byzantine empresses can compare to Ariadne. She lived most of her life 'in the purple', inhabiting the palace at Constantinople for nearly sixty years from the accession in February 457 of her father Leo I until her death in 515, by which time she could be regularly depicted as co-emperor. Ariadne's role in shaping the identity of the early Byzantine empress in the context of the court culture and ideology which surrounded her was fundamental. Her forty-year occupation of the palace as *Augusta* in which she "achieved more than her sex allowed her to do" (Priscian) facilitated the development of the independent household, ritual, and iconography of an empress. Moreover, it was she and not her husbands, who provided the surety of orthodox Christian belief and practice for which the populace of Constantinople regularly clamoured. Through her influence, authority, and patronage, and the many formal ways they were represented, Ariadne set a new imperial mould into which were fitted the empresses Euphemia (518–523), Theodora (527–548) and Sophia (565–582) after her.

### Bibliography

- Candidus. *Fragmenta* (R.C. Blockley, *The Fragmentary Classicising Historians of the Later Roman Empire: Eunapius, Olympiodorus, Priscus and Malchus*, 2 vols, 2.463–73. Liverpool: F. Cairns, 1983).
- Constantine Porphyrogenetos. *De caeremoniis* (English translation in Ann Moffatt and Maxene Tall, *Constantine Porphyrogenetos: The Book of Ceremonies, with the Greek edition of the Corpus Scriptorum Historiae Byzantinae* [Bonn, 1929], 2 vols, ByzAus, vol. 18. Canberra: Australian Association for Byzantine Studies, 2012).
- Cyril of Scythopolis, *Vita Sabae* (Eduard Schwartz, ed., *Kyrrillos von Skythopolis*, TU, Bd 49 2 Heft. Leipzig: J.C. Hinrich, 1939. English translation in Richard M. Price, *Cyril of Scythopolis: Lives of the Monks of Palestine*, Cistercian Studies. Kalamazoo: Cistercian Publications, 1991).

98 Ibid., 10.

99 McClanan, *Representations*, 65.

- Evagrius. *Historia ecclesiastica* (J. Bidez and L. Parmentier, eds, *The Ecclesiastical History of Evagrius with the Scholia*. London: Methuen, 1898).
- John of Antioch. *Fragmenta* (Umberto Roberto, ed., *Ioannis Antiocheni Fragmenta ex Historia chronica. Introduzione, edizione critica e traduzione*, TU, vol. 154. Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2005).
- John Lydus. *De magistratibus populi Romani* (Richard Wünsch, ed., *Ioannis Lydi. De magistratibus populi Romani libri tres*. Leipzig: Teubner, 1903).
- John Malalas. *Chronographia* (J. Thurn, ed., *Ioannis Malalae Chronographia*, CFHB, vol. 35. Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2000).
- Jordanes. *Romana* (Th. Mommsen, ed., *Iordanis Romana et Getica*, MGHAA, Bd 5/1, 2nd ed., 1–52. Berlin: Weidmann, 2005).
- Justinian. *Novellae Constitutiones* (Wilhelm Kroll, ed., *Corpus Iuris Civilis*, vol. 3: *Novellae*. Hildsheim: Weidmann, 1993).
- Kedrenos, George. *Synopsis historion* (Immanuel Bekker, ed., *Georgius Cedrenus. Ioannis Scylitzae Ope*, 2 vols, CSHB, vols 8 and 9. Bonn: Weber, 1838–1839).
- Malchus. *Fragmenta* (R.C. Blockley, *The Fragmentary Classicising Historians of the Later Roman Empire: Eunapius, Olympiodorus, Priscus and Malchus*, 2 vols, 2.401–62. Liverpool: F. Cairns, 1983).
- Marcellinus. *Chronicon* (Th. Mommsen, ed., *Chronica minora saec. IV. v. VI. VII*, Bd 2, MGHAA 11, 37–108. Berlin: Weidmann, 1894).
- Parastaseis suntomoi chronikai* (Th. Preger, *Scriptores originum Constantinopolitanarum*, 2 vols, 1.19–73. Leipzig: Teubner, 1901–1907. English translation in Averil Cameron and Judith Herrin, eds, *Constantinople in the Early Eighth Century: The Parastaseis syntomoi chronikai*, Columbia Studies in the Classical Tradition, vol. 10. Leiden: Brill, 1984).
- Patria Constantinopoleos* (Th. Preger, *Scriptores originum Constantinopolitanarum*, 2 vols, 2.135–283. Leipzig: Teubner, 1901–1907).
- Priscian. *Panegyricus Anastasii* (P. Coyne, ed., *Priscian of Caesarea's De laude Anastasii imperatoris*. Lewiston, N.Y.: E. Mellen Press, 1991).
- Pseudo-Joshua. *Chronicon* (English translation in Frank R. Trombley and John W. Watt, *The Chronicle of Pseudo-Joshua the Stylite*, TTH, vol. 32. Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2000).
- Pseudo-Zachariah of Mytilene. *Historia ecclesiastica* (Ernest W. Brooks, ed., *Historia ecclesiastica Zachariae Rhetori vulgo adscripta*, 2 vols, CSCO, vols 83–84 = CSCO *Scriptores Syri*, vols 38–39. Leuven: L. Durbecq, 1919–1921. English translation in Geoffrey Greatrex et al., *The Chronicle of Pseudo-Zachariah Rhetor: Church and War in Late Antiquity*, TTH, vol. 55. Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2010).
- Severus, *Homily 24* (16 May 513) (M. Brière and F. Graffi, eds, *Les Homiliae cathedrales de Sévère d'Antioche. Homélie XVIII à XXV*, PO, vol. 37/1. Turnhout: Brepols, 1975).

- Theodore Lector. *Historia ecclesiastica* (G.C. Hansen, ed., *Theodorus Anagnostes Kirchengeschichte*, GCS, vol. 54. Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1971).
- Theophanes. *Chronographia* (Carl Gotthard de Boor, ed., *Theophanis Chronographia*, 2 vols. Leipzig: Teubner, 1883–1885. English translation in Cyril Mango and Roger Scott, *The Chronicle of Theophanes Confessor: Byzantine and Near Eastern History AD 284–813*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1997).
- Victor of Tunnuna. *Chronicon* (Th. Mommsen, ed., *Chronica minora saec. IV. V. VI. VII*, Bd 2, MGHAA 11, 163–206. Berlin: Weidmann, 1894).
- Vita Danielis Stylites* (H. Delehaye, ed., *Les saints stylites*, Subsidia Hagiographica, vol. 14. Brussels: Société des Bollandistes, 1923).
- Vita Prima Matronae* (English translation in Jeffrey Featherstone, “Life of Matrona of Perge.” In *Holy Women of Byzantium: Ten Saints’ Lives in English Translation*, edited by A.-M. Talbot, Byzantine Saints’ Lives in Translation, vol. 1, 13–64. Washington D.C.: Dumbarton Oaks, 1996).
- Zonaras. *Epitome historion* (M. Pinder and Theodor Büttner-Wobst, eds, *Ioannis Zonarae Epitome historiarum*, 3 vols, CSHB, vols 47, 48, and 49. Bonn: Weber, 1841–1897).
- Alexander, Paul. *The Oracle of Baalbek: The Tiburtine Sybil in Greek Dress*. Washington D.C.: Dumbarton Oaks, 1967.
- Alföldi-Rosenbaum, Elizabeth. “Portrait Bust of a Young Lady of the Time of Justinian.” *Metropolitan Museum Journal* 1 (1968): 19–40.
- Allen, Pauline. “Contemporary Portrayals of the Empress Theodora (527–548).” In *Stereotypes of Women in Power: Historical Perspectives and Revisionist Views*, edited by Barbara Garlick, Suzanne Dixon, and Pauline Allen, 93–103. New York: Greenwood Press, 1992.
- Angelova, Diliana. “The Ivories of Ariadne and Ideas about Female Imperial Authority in Rome and Early Byzantium.” *Gesta* 43 (2004): 1–15.
- Bellinger, Arthur. *Catalogue of the Byzantine Coins in the Dumbarton Oaks Collection and in the Whittemore Collection: Anastasius I to Maurice, 491–602*. Washington, D.C.: Dumbarton Oaks, 1992.
- Brubaker, Leslie, and H. Tobler. “Memories of Helena: Patterns of Matronage in the Fourth and Fifth Centuries.” In *Women, Men and Eunuchs; Gender in Byzantium*, edited by Liz James, 52–75. London: Routledge, 1997.
- . “The Gender of Money: Byzantine Empresses on Coins (324–802).” *Gender and History* 12 (2000): 851–52.
- Budge, Ernest A.W. *Texts Relating to Saint Mênâ of Egypt and Canons of Nicaea in a Nubian Dialect*. London: British Museum, 1909.
- Bury, John B. *A History of the Later Roman Empire*. London: Macmillan, 1923.
- Cameron, Averil. “The Empress Sophia.” *Byz* 65 (1975): 5–21 (reproduced in Averil Cameron, *Continuity and Change in Sixth-Century Byzantium*. London: Variorum, 1981).

- Connor, Carolyn. *Women of Byzantium*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2004.
- Conrad, Lawrence I. "Zeno the Epileptic Emperor: Historiography and Polemics as Sources of Realia." *Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies* 24 (2000): 61–81.
- Croke, Brian. "Basiliscus the Boy Emperor." *GRBS* 24 (1983): 81–91 (reproduced in Brian Croke, *Christian Chronicles and Byzantine History, 5th–6th Centuries*. Aldershot: Ashgate, 1992).
- . "The Imperial Reigns of Leo II." *ByzZ* 96 (2003): 561–63.
- . "Dynasty and Ethnicity: Leo I, Zeno and the Eclipse of Aspar." *Chiron* 35 (2005): 147–201.
- . "Dynasty and Aristocracy in the Fifth Century." In M. Maas, ed., *Cambridge Companion to the Age of Attila*, 102–26. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014.
- Dagron, Gilbert. *Emperor and Priest: The Official Office in Byzantium*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003.
- Delbrueck, Richard. *Dittici consolari tardoantichi*, edited by Marilena Abbatepaolo. Bari: Edipuglia, 2009.
- Dijkstra, Jitse, and Geoffrey Greatrex. "Patriarchs and Politics in Constantinople in the Reign of Anastasius (with a re-edition of *O.Mon.Epiph.59*)." *Millennium* 6 (2009): 227–30.
- Doran, Robert, trans. *The Lives of Simeon Stylites*. Kalamazoo: Cistercian Studies, 1992.
- Drescher, James. *Three Coptic Legends: Hilaria, Archellites, the Seven Sleepers*. Cairo: l'Institut français d'archéologie orientale du Caire, 1947.
- Foss, Clive. "The Empress Theodora." *Byz* 72 (2002): 141–76.
- Garland, Lynda. *Women and Power in Byzantium, AD 527–1204*. London: Routledge, 1999.
- Greatrex, Geoffrey. "The Fall of Macedonius Reconsidered." In *Studia Patristica*, vol. 44, ed. J. Baun, A. Cameron, M. Edwards, and M. Vinzent, papers presented at the 15th International Conference on Patristic Studies, Oxford 2007, 125–29. Leuven: Peeters, 2010.
- Grierson, Philip. "The Tombs and Obits of the Byzantine Emperors (337–1042); With an Additional Note by Philip Grierson, Cyril Mango and Ihor Ševčenko," *DOP* 16 (1962): 1–63.
- Grierson, Philip, and Melinda Mays. *Catalogue of Late Roman Coins in the Dumbarton Oaks Collection and in the Whittemore Collection: From Arcadius and Honorius to the Accession of Anastasius*. Washington D.C.: Dumbarton Oaks, 1994.
- Haarer, Fiona. *Anastasius I: Politics and Empire in the Late Roman World*. Cambridge: Francis Cairns, 2006.
- Hahn, G. "Die Münzprägung für Aelia Ariadne." In *Byzantios: Festschrift für Herbert Hunger*, edited by W. Hörandner, et al., 101–106. Vienna: E. Becvar, 1984.
- Herrin, Judith. *Women in Purple: Rulers of Medieval Byzantium*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2004.

- . *Unrivaled Influence: Women and Empire in Byzantium*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2013.
- Holum, Kenneth G. *Theodosian Empresses: Women and Imperial Dominion in Late Antiquity*, TCH, vol. 3. Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1982.
- Holum, Kenneth G., and Gary Vikan, "The Trier Ivory, 'Adventus' Ceremonial, and the Relics of St. Stephen," *DOP* 33 (1979): 113–33.
- James, Liz. *Empresses and Power in Early Byzantium*. Leicester: Leicester University Press, 2001.
- . "Goddess, Whore, Wife or Slave? Will the Real Byzantine Empress Please Stand Up?" In *Queens and Queenship in Medieval Europe*, edited by Anne J. Duggan, 123–40. London: Boydell and Brewer, 2002.
- . "Making a Name: Reputation and Imperial Founding and Refounding in Constantinople." *Wiener Jahrbuch für Kunstgeschichte* 60/61 (2011/12): 63–72.
- Janin, Raymond. *La géographie ecclésiastique de l'Empire byzantine*, vol. 1/3. Paris: Institut français d'études byzantines, 1969.
- Jones, A.H.M. *The Later Roman Empire 284–602: A Social, Economic and Administrative Survey*. Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1964.
- Kent, John. "The Empress Ariadne: What's in a name?" *Nordisk Numismatisk Arsskrift/Nordic Numismatic Journal* 51 (1991): 35–44.
- Kiel-Freytag, A. "Betrachtungen zur Usurpation des Illus und des Leontius (484–488 n. Chr.)." *ZPE* 174 (2010): 291–301.
- Kosinski, Rafal. "Leo II—Some Chronological Questions." *Palamedes* 3 (2008), 210–11.
- . *The Emperor Zeno: Religion and Politics*. Cracow: Historia Jagellonica, 2010.
- . "Euphemios, Patriarch of Constantinople in the Years 490–496." *JbOB* 62 (2012): 66–69.
- Lane-Fox, Robin. "The *Life of Daniel*." In *Portraits: Biographical Representation in the Greek and Latin Literature of the Roman Empire*, edited by Mark Edwards and S. Swain, 189–90. Oxford: Oxford University Press 1997.
- Laiou, Angeliki E. "Women in Byzantine Society." In *Women in Medieval Western European Culture*, edited by Linda Mitchell, 81–94. New York: Garland Press, 1999.
- Lee, A.D. *From Rome to Byzantium, AD 363 to 565*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2012.
- Leppin, Hartmut. "Theodora und Justinian." In *Die Kaiserinnen Roms. Von Livia bis Theodora*, edited by H. Temporini-Gräfin Vitzthum, 437–81. Munich: C.H. Beck, 2002.
- Leszka, M.J. "Empress-Widow Verina's Political Activity during the Reign of Emperor Zeno." In *Mélanges d'Histoire Byzantine offerts à Oktawiusz Jurewicz à l'Occasion de son soixante-dixième Anniversaire*, edited by W. Ceran, 128–36. Łódź: Wydawn Uniwersytetu Łódzkiego, 1998.
- Lilie, R.J. "Die Krönung des Kaisers Anastasios I (491)." *Byzantinoslavica* 56 (1995): 3–12.



- Lucchelli, Tomaso M., and F. Rohr Vio, "Augustae, le donne dei principi. Riflessioni su Augustae." *Athenaeum* 100 (2012): 499–511.
- Magliaro, Lorenzo. *Arianna. La garante della porpora*, Donne d'Oriente e d'Occidente. Milan: Jaca Books, 2013.
- Mango, Cyril. *The Art of the Byzantine Empire 312–1453*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1986.
- Martindale, John R., *Prosopography of the Later Roman Empire*, vol. 2: AD 395–527. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1980.
- McCormick, Michael. "Emperors." In *The Byzantines*, edited by Guiglielmo Cavallo, 230–54. Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1997.
- . "The Emperor and Court." In *Cambridge Ancient History*, vol. 14, edited by Averil Cameron, Brian Ward Perkins, and Michael Whitby, 135–63. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001.
- McClanan, Anne. "The Empress Theodora and the Tradition of Women's Patronage in the Early Byzantine Empire." In *The Cultural Patronage of Medieval Women*, edited by J.H. McCash, 50–72. Athens, Ga: University of Georgia Press, 1996.
- . *Representations of Early Byzantine Empresses: Image and Empire*. London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002.
- Meier, Mischa. *Anastasios I: Die Entstehung des Byzantinischen Reiches*. Stuttgart: Klett-Cotta, 2009.
- . "Ariadne: der 'Rote Faden' des Kaisertums." In *Augustae: Machtbewusste Frauen am römischen Kaiserhof? Herrschaftsstrukturen und Herrschaftspraxis II*, edited by A. Kolb, Akten der Tagung in Zürich. 18.–20.9.2008, 277–91. Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 2010.
- Mitchell, Stephen. *A History of the Later Roman Empire, AD 284–641*, 2nd ed. London: Wiley-Blackwell, 2015.
- Olariu, C. "Legitimacy and Usurpation in the Age of Zeno." *Pomoerium* 6 (2007–2008): 101–106.
- Olovsson, Cecilia. "Representing Consulship." *Opuscula* 4 (2011): 99–123.
- Redies, M. "Die Usurpation des Basiliskos (475–6) im Kontext der aufstiegenderen monophysitischen Kirche." *AnTard* 5 (1997): 211–21.
- Ross, Marvin C., Stephen R. Zwirn, and Susan A. Boyd, *Catalogue of the Byzantine and Early Medieval Antiquities in the Dumbarton Oaks Collection: Jewelry, Enamels, and Art of the Migration Period*, vol. 2 Washington, D.C.: Dumbarton Oaks, 2005.
- Rubery, Eileen. "The Vienna 'Empress' Ivory and its Companion in Florence: Crowned in Different Glories?" In *Wonderful Things. Byzantium through its Art*, edited by Antony Eastmond and Liz James, 99–114. London: Ashgate, 2013.
- Siebig, Gereon. *Kaiser Leo I. Das oströmische Reich in den ersten drei Jahren seiner Regierung (457–460 n.Chr.)*, 2 vols, Beiträge zur Altertumskunde, Bd 276. Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2010.



- Smith, Julia. "Did Women Have a Transformation of the Roman World?" *Gender and History* 12 (2000): 552–71.
- Shoemaker, Stephen J. "The Cult of Fashion: The Earliest Life of the Virgin and Constantinople's Marian Relics." *DOP* 62 (2008): 53–74.
- Treadgold, Warren. *A History of the Byzantine State and Society*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1997.
- Walker, A. "Numismatic and Metrological Parallels for the Iconography of Early Byzantine Marriage Jewelry. The Question of the Crowned Bride." *Travaux et Mémoires* 16 (2010): 849–63.
- Wortley, John. "The Marian Relics at Constantinople." *GRBS* 45 (2005): 171–87.

# Dream Interpretation and Christian Identity in Late Antique Rome and Byzantium

*Bronwen Neil*

*To sleep: perchance to dream: ay, there's the rub.*

SHAKESPEARE, *Hamlet* (1602)

## 1 Introduction

Steven Oberhelman justly observed that, “Dreams had a checkered history throughout the formation and growth of Christianity.”<sup>1</sup> Dreams and dream interpretation in Greco-Roman culture and in the Christian culture of late antiquity have received much scholarly attention in recent decades.<sup>2</sup> In late

1 Steven M. Oberhelman, *Dreambooks in Byzantium: Six Oneirocritica in Translation, with Commentary and Introduction* (Abingdon: Ashgate, 2008), 45.

2 Recent general studies of dreams in classical antiquity include: Beat Näf, *Traum und Traumdeutung im Altertum* (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 2004); William V. Harris, *Dreams and Experience in Classical Antiquity* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2009); in the Roman principate and beyond: J.S. Hanson, “Dreams and Visions in the Graeco-Roman World and Early Christianity,” in *Aufstieg und Niedergang der römischen Welt*, part 2, vol. 23/2, ed. Wolfgang Haase (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1980), 1395–427; Juliette Harrison, *Dreams and Dreaming in the Roman Empire: Cultural Memory and Imagination* (London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2013); in Christian late antiquity: Jacqueline Amat, *Songes et visions: l'au-delà dans la littérature latine tardive*, CEASA, vol. 109 (Paris: Études augustiniennes, 1985); Franca Ela Consolino, “Sogni e visioni nell'agiographia tardoantica: modelli e variazioni sul tema,” *Aug* 29 (1989): 237–56; Patricia Cox Miller, *Dreams in Late Antiquity: Studies in the Imagination of a Culture* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994); Fritz Graf, “Dreams, Visions, and Revelations: Dreams in the Thought of the Latin Fathers,” in *Sub Imagine Somni: Nighttime Phenomena in Greco-Roman Culture*, ed. Emma Scioli and Christine Wade (Pisa: Edizioni ETS, 2010), 211–31; Leslie Dossey, “Watchful Greeks and Lazy Romans: Disciplining Sleep in Late Antiquity,” *J ECS* 21 (2013): 209–39; Guy G. Stroumsa, “Dreams and Visions in Early Christian Discourse,” in *Dream Cultures: Explorations in the Comparative History of Dreaming*, ed. David Dean Shulman and Guy G. Stroumsa (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999), 189–212; in the Middle Ages and Byzantine empire: the collected essays in *I Sogni nel Medioevo. Seminario internazionale Roma, 2–4 ottobre 1983*, ed.

antiquity Christian attitudes towards visions, dreams, and dream symbolism were ambivalent, to say the least. While pagan dream manuals were outlawed, partly because of their focus on sexual material that was taboo for Christians, including bestiality, some anonymous Byzantine dream manuals were produced, telling lay Christians how to interpret the images they saw in their dreams. The question of divine inspiration was troubling to Christian commentators on dreams and visions. In this chapter I consider how two Christian authors, Gregory the Great and the anonymous author of a dream key manual ascribed to the prophet Daniel, dealt with the interpretation of dreams. The differences in the ways that dreams were understood by these western and eastern authors may be explained by the emergence of distinctive Christian identities in the eastern and western churches, as these Christians sought to define themselves against paganism in very different ways.

Byzantine dream key manuals give us a sense of the ‘social aspirations and anxieties’—to coin the phrase of MacAlister<sup>3</sup>—of ordinary men, and significantly less often, of women. The western church allowed for the appearance of the divine in dreams, and the communication of divine revelations. The use of dreams and visions as illustrative material for the lives of saints in Gregory’s *Dialogi* stands in contrast to the demise of eastern dreambooks from the sixth century, as the Byzantine church came down increasingly hard upon dreams and the interpretation of dreams, or divination, which was considered a species of magic. Dreams were perhaps the final frontier of personal identity to be conquered by Christianity, and the continuity between Greco-Roman dreambooks, such as the second-century Greek writer Artemidorus’ *Oneirocritica*,<sup>4</sup> and Byzantine dreambooks and dream key manuals is obvious from even a cursory glance at the contents. The evidence for this gentler western church attitude to the vagaries of laypeople’s dream life is scanty, however,

---

Tullio Gregory, *Lessico intellettuale Europeo*, vol. 35 (Rome: Edizioni dell’Ateneo, 1985); Steven F. Kruger, *Dreaming in the Middle Ages*, Cambridge Studies in Medieval Literature, vol. 14 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992); Maria Mavroudi, *A Byzantine Book on Dream Interpretation: The Oneirocriticon of Achmet and its Arabic Sources*, The Medieval Mediterranean: Peoples, Economics and Cultures 400–1453, vol. 36 (Leiden: Brill, 2002); Steven M. Oberhelman, ed., *Dreams, Healing, and Medicine in Greece: From Antiquity to the Present* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2013); and the unpublished 2012 Byzantine Studies Fall Workshop on “The (Mis)interpretation of Byzantine Dream Narratives,” held at Dumbarton Oaks, November 8–10. Only Kruger, *Dreaming*, 45–48, 125 and 161 treats Gregory the Great’s *Dial.* in any detail.

3 Suzanne MacAlister, “Gender as Sign and Symbolism in Artemidorus’ *Oneirocritica*: Social Aspirations and Anxieties,” *Helion* 19 (1992): 140–60.

4 See the new edition and translation by Daniel E. Harris-McCoy, *Artemidorus’ Oneirocritica: Text, Translation, and Commentary* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012).

as Oberhelman remarks,<sup>5</sup> and Gregory's *Dialogi* are powerful evidence that such forbearance was the norm, at least in the Roman church.

A comparison of these two texts is only justified by their approximate contemporaneity. In terms of genre the two texts are quite different, with different literary purposes. *Oνειροcriticon* of Daniel was translated into Latin probably in the seventh century, and was known as *Somniale Danielis*.<sup>6</sup> This translation circulated widely in the Middle Ages. Oberhelman believes that the original Greek version is most accurately placed in the fourth century.<sup>7</sup> *Dialogi* were almost certainly written by Gregory while he was bishop of Rome (590–604). Francis Clark disputed the work's authenticity, claiming that the text was constructed from archival papal documents only ca. 670–680,<sup>8</sup> but his arguments have now been conclusively rejected by most scholars.<sup>9</sup> The four books of *Dialogi* between Gregory and his close friend, Peter the Deacon, are presented in question-and-answer format, and were intended as edifying tales of the saints of Italy, to fill the gap that Gregory perceived in his homeland. They do not seem to have circulated widely in the seventh century but became one of the most popular of Gregory's works in the Middle Ages, with translations into several languages, including Old English in the late ninth century, Old French in the twelfth century, and Middle Dutch in the thirteenth century.<sup>10</sup>

Both eastern and western traditions drew on the same body of Hebrew and Christian scriptures for exempla of dreams and visions.<sup>11</sup> Even within scripture, various attitudes to dreams emerge. The Wisdom literature, especially Ecclesiastes and Sirach, shows the harshest attitude to dreams, warning that they can often be the tool of false prophets.<sup>12</sup> In the New Testament canon, the apocrypha and pseudepigrapha, meant for a wide audience of Gentile or

5 Isabel Moreira, "Dreams and Divination in Early Medieval Canonical and Narrative Sources: The Question of Clerical Control," *CHR* 89 (2003): 634 and 642.

6 Oberhelman, *Dreambooks*, 2–3. See the edition of Lawrence Martin, *The Somniale Danielis: An Edition of a Medieval Latin Dream Interpretation Handbook*, Lateinische Sprache und Literatur des Mittelalters, Bd 10 (Lang: Frankfurt, 1981).

7 Oberhelman, *Dreambooks*, 55.

8 Francis Clarke, *The Pseudo-Gregorian Dialogues*, 2 vols (Leiden: Brill, 1987).

9 See the summary of recent scholarship on this question in Stephen Lake, "Hagiography and the Cult of Saints," in *A Companion to Gregory the Great*, ed. Bronwen Neil and Matthew dal Santo (Leiden: Brill, 2013), 225–26.

10 See Constant J. Mews and Claire Renkin, "The Legacy of Gregory the Great in the Latin West," in Neil and dal Santo, *A Companion to Gregory the Great*, 316.

11 See Oberhelman, *Dreambooks*, 46–49.

12 There is a vast bibliography on the interpretation of dreams in the Hebrew Bible and Talmud: see Oberhelman, *Dreambooks*, 46–47, for an introduction. For a bibliography of

pagan background, on the other hand, dreams and dream interpretation are viewed more positively.<sup>13</sup> We return to scriptural exempla below.

## 2 Dreams and Visions in *Dialogi* of Gregory the Great

While eastern Christian hagiographic literature often depicted saints as having dreams,<sup>14</sup> Latin hagiography after the age of the martyrs seemed more ambivalent on this subject, with the famous dream of Jerome and the prophetic dream of Augustine being notable autobiographic exceptions.<sup>15</sup> Merovingian hagiographers embraced the subject of prophetic dreams by both Gallic laity and clergy.<sup>16</sup> Gregory the Great was the first to do so for Italian saints and laity in his four books of *Dialogi*.

In *Dialogi* 4.48, Gregory gives his famous taxonomy of dreams and their causes. In answer to Peter's remark: "I should like to know whether we need to take these nightly visions seriously," Gregory elaborated upon six ways that dreams come to the soul. They may be caused:<sup>17</sup>

1. by a full stomach;
2. by an empty stomach;
3. by the illusions of the Devil, 'the master of deceit' (Sir 34:7; Lev 19:26);
4. by both thought and illusion: *Dreams follow many cares* (Eccl 5:2);
5. by divine revelation: e.g. Joseph's dreams (Gen 37:5–10); and
6. by both thoughts in our mind and revelation, e.g. Nebuchadnezzar (Dan 2:29–31).

---

studies on post-biblical literature on the subject see Maren Niehoff, "A Dream which is not Interpreted is Like a Letter which is not Read," *JJS* 43 (1992): 58–84.

13 See Stroumsa, "Dreams and Visions," 194–96.

14 Jacques Le Goff, "Le christianisme et les rêves (II<sup>e</sup>–VII<sup>e</sup> siècles)," in Gregory, *I Sogni nel Medioevo*, 205–13.

15 On Jerome's dream in which he rejected pagan learning see Miller, *Dreams*, 205–13 and 230–31. See also the autobiographic description of Augustine's dreams in *Conf.* 9.10.23–24 (NBA 1.278–280).

16 See the discussion of prophetic dreams in Gregory of Tours, *Gloria confessorum*, by Moreira, "Dreams and Divination," 624–27, and of other hagiographic sources, 634–41.

17 Gregory I, *Dial.* 4.50.2 (SC 265,172). English translation in Odo J. Zimmerman, *Saint Gregory the Great: Dialogues*, Fathers of the Church, vol. 39 (Washington, D.C.: Catholic University of America Press, 1959), with modifications.

We may compare these six types with the six types identified by Kenny in her study of ninth-century Byzantine hagiography:<sup>18</sup>

1. Personal-mnemonic, which includes everyday matters in the dreamer's life (= Gregory's types 4 and 6, those that are influenced by the mind);
2. medical-somatic, which includes those episodes related to the workings of the body (= Gregory's types 1 and 2);
3. prophetic, which present aspects of future events (= Gregory's types 5 and 6);
4. archetypal-spiritual, in which the dreamer explores existential questions, and which results in some transformation of behaviour (= Gregory's types 5 and 6);
5. nightmares, with upsetting or frightening images (= any of Gregory's types); and
6. lucid dreams, in which the dreamer is aware of experiencing a dream and then consciously alter[s] the events (not mentioned by Gregory).

### 2.1 *Gregory's Types 1 and 2: Physical Reactions*

The first two ways, Gregory comments, "we all know from personal experience." They were particularly relevant in a monastic context where food consumption was regulated to ascetic levels. Both gluttony and hunger were thought to induce erotic dreams, to which we return below.

### 2.2 *Types 3 and 4: Illusions of the Devil*

In regard to dreams generated by the devil's influence (type 3), Gregory cited two warnings in the Hebrew Scriptures: "Dreams have made many to err, and hoping in them have they been deceived" (Sir 34:7), and "You shall not divine or observe dreams" (Lev 19:26). "From these words we see how detestable dreams are, seeing that they are put into a class with divination."<sup>19</sup>

18 Margaret Kenny, "Distinguishing between Dreams and Visions in Ninth-Century Hagiography," *Gouden Hoorn: Tijdschrift over Byzantium* 4/1 (1996): <http://www.isidore-of-seville.com/goudenhoorn/41margaret.html> (accessed 13.9.13). I note that Kenny concludes that the six types do not reflect distinctions made in ninth-century Byzantine hagiographic texts.

19 Gregory I, *Dial.* 4.50.3 (SC 265.174): "Quibus profecto uerbis cuius sint detestationis ostenditur quae auguriis coniunguntur."

### 2.3 *Type 5 and 6: Divine Revelations*

Gregory attributed revelations to saints, simple boys, virgins young and old, and members of the clergy. Purity of heart is the common factor among those who received such divine visions. An odd exception is the soldier who died of the plague, saw a vision, and came back to life to tell what he saw. His vision concerned an honourable man named Stephen, at one time resident in business in Constantinople, who had later died of the plague in Rome. Whilst crossing a bridge, his foot slipped, and half his body was left hanging over the edge of the bridge. "Some fiendish men from the river below seized him by the sides and tried to pull him down. At the same time, princely men dressed in white appeared on the bridge to draw him back to safety."<sup>20</sup> In the middle of this human tug-of-war, the soldier was recalled to earth to be reunited with his body,<sup>21</sup> so we never learn what became of the tormented Stephen. Gregory interprets this vision to mean that the sins of the flesh strove with the works of alms in the moment of judgement. It was the soul of the soldier, freed from the shackles of his body, who saw the vision. Only Gregory could interpret it, however, since the soldier lacked the discernment that is proper to saints.

Revelations were not strictly speaking dreams but visions given while the subject was awake. For example, Gregory tells of a simple boy who fell ill and saw, not in a dream but while he was awake, a vision of heaven and received the gifts of prophecy and tongues; he died three days later.<sup>22</sup> Three more examples are given of monks who saw revelations foretelling their deaths, whether immanent or two years hence.<sup>23</sup>

First, the holy martyrs St Juvenal and St Eleutherius in shining raiment attended the dying bishop Probus of Reati, and were seen by a small boy who, "not acquainted with any such strange visions" recounted the vision to his father and the bishop's doctors. Coming to the bishop, they found him dead, for the saints had carried away his soul.<sup>24</sup>

Second, Gregory relates the death of his aunt, the virgin Tarsilla, to whom her relative Pope Felix appeared and showed the mansion of light she would

20 Ibid., 4.37.12 (SC 265.132): "a quibusdam teterrimis uiris ex flumine surgentibus per coxas deorsum, atque a quibusdam albatis et speciosissimis uiris coepit per brachia sursum trahi."

21 Ibid.

22 Ibid., 4.27.10–13 (SC 265.92–94).

23 Ibid., 4.49 (SC 265.168–72).

24 Ibid., 4.13 (SC 265.54): "Ille autem tantae uisionis nouitatem non ferens, cursu concito extra fores fugit, atque eos quos uiderat patri ac medicis nuntiauit. Qui concite descenderunt, sed agrum quem reliquerant iam defunctum inuenerunt, quia illi eum secum tulerant."

inhabit after death, and who saw Jesus appearing to her in her final moments.<sup>25</sup> He also recounts the death of a young woman who saw a vision of sundry virgins in the service of the Virgin Mary, who promised the girl that she should enter her service thirty days later. They appeared again on the appointed day as the girl lay dying, and took her soul up to heaven.

Third, St Benedict saw a vision of the soul of a bishop being taken up to heaven:

Upon this sight a marvellous strange thing followed, for, as he himself later reported, the whole world, gathered as it were together under one beam of the sun, was presented before his eyes, and while the venerable father stood attentively beholding the brightness of that glittering light, he saw the soul of Germanus, Bishop of Capua, in a fiery globe to be carried up by angels into heaven.<sup>26</sup>

Later, Benedict saw a premonition of his own death.<sup>27</sup> These revelations were all fulfilled, a criterion of any true vision from God.

In his ground-breaking study of Christianity and dreams from the second to seventh centuries, Le Goff suggested that a hierarchy could be detected in biblical accounts of dreams and visions, where the nearer one was to God the clearer the dream or vision and its content.<sup>28</sup> At the top of the hierarchy were patriarchs such as Moses, who saw and heard God clearly in non-symbolic dreams. Others, like the prophets Samuel and Nathan, who were not as close to God, received visions with symbolic content, that were harder to understand. This kind of hierarchy does not seem to be operative in Gregory's account of dreamers and their dreams and visions. Rather, it is only the saint who can discern the meaning of a dream. So the dream may be symbolic, but the saint can still understand it.

---

25 *Ibid.*, 4.17 (SC 265.68–70).

26 *Ibid.*, 2.35-3 (SC260.238): "Mira autem ualde res in hac speculatione secuta est, quia, sicut post ipse narrauit, omnis etiam mundus, uelut sub uno solis radio collectus, ante oculos eius adductus est. Qui uenerabilis pater, dum intentam oculorum aciem in hoc splendore coruscae lucis infigeret, uidit Germani Capuani episcopi animam in sphaera ignea ab angelis in caelum ferri."

27 *Ibid.*, 2.37.1 (SC 260.242).

28 Le Goff, "Le christianisme," 171–218.



### 3 Appearances of Saints in Divine Revelations

The appearance of saints in dream types 5 and 6 was a regular occurrence, as in one of the scriptural examples Gregory gave for type 5, that of the appearance of the angel Gabriel to Joseph of Nazareth, telling him to take Mary and the child Jesus to Egypt (Matt 2:13). St Peter was apt to appear in the church dedicated to him in Rome, whether to the doorkeeper or to a young woman who was sick with palsy and prayed for a cure.<sup>29</sup> In the former case the doorkeeper Theodore was sick for many days after his vision although he had been perfectly healthy beforehand. Peter expresses his puzzlement and is answered with Scripture: even the prophet Daniel became sick for very many days after his great and terrible vision (Dan 8:27). “The flesh is overwhelmed by the things of the spirit. Sometimes, therefore, when the mind is allowed to see beyond its human powers, the body cannot but grow weak, because the task imposed is more than it can endure.”<sup>30</sup>

Gregory discusses the interesting case of the holy abbot Equitius, father of many monasteries, who endured many sore and carnal temptations in his younger years. He prayed ardently for a cure, and one night he received a vision:

[O]ne night he saw himself made a eunuch while an angel stood by. Through this vision he realized that all disturbances of the flesh had been taken away, and from that time on he was a complete stranger to temptations of this kind as though his body were no longer subject to the tendencies of human nature.<sup>31</sup>

Interestingly, although Equitius now felt himself safe to work around women, he did not allow his fellow monks to do so.

Gregory concluded that since we often cannot be sure of the source of the dream, it is not wise to put one’s faith in it.<sup>32</sup> Gregory illustrated his point with the example of a monk who was promised long life in a dream, and yet died shortly afterwards:

<sup>29</sup> Gregory I, *Dial.* 3.24–25 (SC 260.362–66).

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*, 3.24.3 (SC 260.362–64): “Caro enim ea quae sunt spiritus capere non ualet, et idcirco nonnumquam, cum mens humana ultra se ad uidendum ducitur, necesse est ut hoc carneum uasculum, quod ferre talenti pondus non ualet, infirmetur.”

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*, 1.4.1 (SC 260.38): “nocte quadam adsistente angelo eunuchizari se uidit, eiusque uisioni apparuit quod omnem motum ex genitalibus membris eius abscederet, atque ex eo tempore ita alienus extitit a temptatione, ac si sexum non haberet in corpore.”

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*, 4.50.6 (SC 265.174).

This happened recently to one of our men who believed strongly in dreams. In one of them he was promised a long life. After collecting a large sum of money to last him for many years, he died very suddenly, leaving all of his wealth behind untouched, without having so much as a single good work to take with him.<sup>33</sup>

This monk demonstrated by his actions that he was no saint, and therefore it was no surprise that he lacked the gift of discernment when it came to reading his own dreams.

#### 4 The Dreambook of Daniel

The anonymous Greek *Oneirocriticon* attributed to the Hebrew prophet Daniel dates from somewhere between the fourth and seventh (or even ninth) centuries,<sup>34</sup> and may be a contemporary work to Gregory's *Dialogi*. It seems to be the earliest Byzantine dream key manual to have survived, and was modelled on the tradition of classical dream manuals like that of the Greek second-century writer, Artemidorus. Dream key manuals like Daniel's, in which dream symbols were listed in alphabetical order, were shorter than dreambooks, which included some attempt at formulating dream theory. "Byzantine dream key manuals were viewed as a template that one could revise and adapt at will."<sup>35</sup> Daniel's *Oneirocriticon* took an amoral approach to the subject of dreams, and allowed lay people to interpret their own dreams without Christian overtones, much as they had done in Artemidorus' day. However, the lack of such texts from the second century CE until their re florescence under the Arabs in the late ninth century,<sup>36</sup> may indicate (apart from the perennial imponderable of survival) that such an attitude was not universal and was not endorsed by the

33 Ibid., 4.51.1 (SC 265.176): "Sicut cuidam nostro nuper certum est contigisse, qui dum somnia uehementer attenderet, ei per somnium longa spatia huius uitae promissa sunt. Cumque multas pecunias pro longioris uitae stipendiis collegisset, ita repente defunctus est, ut intactas omnes relinqueret et ipse secum nihil ex bono opera portaret."

34 Oberhelman, *Dreambooks*, 2–3.

35 Ibid., 4.

36 On the revival of interest in dreambooks by Byzantine emperors, starting with Leo VI (886–912), see Oberhelman, *Dreambooks*, 55–58. On Arab translations of Greek *oneirocritica*, most notably the dreambook of the tenth-century Arab Christian Achmet, see Mavroudi, *A Byzantine Book*; John C. Lamoreaux, *The Early Muslim Tradition of Dream Interpretation* (Albany, N.Y.: SUNY Press, 2002); and Elizabeth Sirriyeh, "Muslims Dreaming of Christians, Christians Dreaming of Muslims," *Islam and Muslim-Christian Relations* 17

eastern church. Other evidence for the suppression of dreambooks is found in Byzantine imperial legislation banning oneiromancy, which reiterated earlier laws.<sup>37</sup> In the West, meanwhile, there was no specific legislation against oneiromancy until the so-called *Constitutions of Boniface*, ca. 813–840.<sup>38</sup> By the mid-eleventh century, the most influential book of medieval canon law, Gratian's *Decretum*, condemned all types of dreambooks that were circulating in the West, including *Somniale Danielis*.<sup>39</sup>

Part of the problem with dream key manuals was the amount of erotic content. Erotic dreams were usually viewed as a problem in Christian communities, especially in monastic contexts.<sup>40</sup> Evagrius, for example, writes about how demons can cause monks to have erotic dreams, and sinful nocturnal emissions result.<sup>41</sup> Pagan dreambooks, by contrast, cast no moral judgement on the sexual content of dreams, whether of rape, gerontophilia, phallic penetration, or adultery. The following examples of dream symbolism from Daniel's *Oneirocriticon* illustrate the point:

Breasts are symbols of fruitfulness:

61. Dreaming of breasts filled with milk signifies profit.
62. Dreaming that your breasts have been cut off is a bitter sign.

---

(2006): 207–21. Lamoreaux, *Early Muslim Tradition*, 4, counts sixty Arab dreambooks from the first 450 years of Islam, an indication of their widespread popularity.

37 Oberhelman, *Dreambooks*, 52; and MacAlister, "Gender as Sign," 105–106.

38 Moreira, "Dreams and Divination," 629–42, examines canon law and penitential sources indicating clerical control over lay persons in Gaul. The sources she adduces, including the earliest church council ruling against divination (the Greek Council of Ancyra in 314), do not single out dream interpretation in blanket condemnations of soothsaying or divination prior to the eighth century. On *Constitutions of Boniface*, which were directed to a clerical, rather than lay, audience see *ibid.*, 633.

39 Kruger, *Dreaming in the Middle Ages*, 12–13.

40 See David Brakke, "The Problematization of Nocturnal Emissions in Early Christian Syria, Egypt, and Gaul," *J ECS* 3 (1995): 419–60; *idem*, "The Making of Monastic Demonology: Three Ascetic Teachers on Withdrawal and Resistance," *CH* 70 (2001): 19–48; Dyan Elliott, *Fallen Bodies: Pollution, Sexuality and Demonology* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1999), 20, on Augustine's use of the term 'illusion' [*inlusio*] for demonic intrusion in dreams, which came to have erotic overtones from then on, making an automatic link between erotic dreams and nightmares, on which see also Charles Stewart, "Erotic Dreams and Nightmares from Antiquity to the Present," *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute* 8 (2002): 279–80, 291, and 297–98.

41 See Brakke, "Problematization," 438–41 on the formation of dream images in Evagrius thought.

Virginity is a sign of virtue in women but male sex with a virgin is not.

- 97. If a woman dreams of being a virgin, this signifies gracefulness.<sup>42</sup>
- 349. Sex with a virgin means spiritual distress.

Adultery, or sex with a man/woman other than one's spouse, means illness for a female dreamer but good profit for a male dreamer, or portends adultery in real life.

- 96. If a woman dreams of having sex with a man other than her husband, this signifies illness (or 'moral weakness' on the part of the husband).<sup>43</sup>
- 103. Dreaming of a woman who is beautifying her face or who is simply walking around points to adultery.
- 104. Having sex with a woman you know, even if she is married to someone else: this signifies illness (or 'moral weakness' on the part of the husband).
- 107. Having sex with a prudent woman means something good.
- 112. If you dream of a woman dancing or jumping around, this indicates adultery.<sup>44</sup>
- 253. A man plying a loom will commit adultery with a married woman.<sup>45</sup>
- 350. Sex with another man's wife means good profit.
- 351. Sex with one's concubine means something good.
- 352. Sex with one's own slavegirl means strife.

Sex within marriage is a good sign.

- 343. Going to bed with one's own wife is good for someone away on a trip [i.e. reunited with his wife after a safe trip home].

---

42 Or 'mildness': Oberhelman, *Dreambooks*, 72, n.110.

43 Ibid., 72, n.109, suggests this alternative interpretation, but it is not clear to me why the moral weakness would pertain to the husband and not to the wife. Cf. no.104 below.

44 Note that dancing was condemned by the church. See Alexander Kazhdan, ed., *The Oxford Dictionary of Byzantium* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991), 1.582.

45 Oberhelman, *Dreambooks*, 89, n.267, notes that this image would be contrary to custom since women were supposed to do the weaving; the plying of a loom could be a sexual metaphor.

Homosexuality, or phallic penetration of men by men, was viewed negatively.

- 353. Sex with a man means someone will completely subdue you.
- 357. Being phallically penetrable means the loss of your wife.

Necrophilia is a positive sign.

- 346. Having sex with a corpse means a successful outcome to your actions.<sup>46</sup>

Prostitutes could be positive or negative.

- 254. For one to be on fire without smoke signifies love for a female prostitute along with profit.
- 348. Sex with a prostitute means not a little profit.
- 369. If your mother becomes a prostitute it means some kind of danger.
- 374. Sex with a prostitute indicates distress.
- 425. Spending time with prostitutes indicates toil.<sup>47</sup>

Gerontophilia is a portent of completion in your activities.

- 355. Sex with an old woman means completion in your activities.
- 373. Sitting with an old man or sex with an old woman means completeness in your actions.<sup>48</sup>

Men and women were sometimes given different interpretations for the same symbol but not in Daniel's *Oneirocriticon*. The focus is on male dreamers, with only two explicit addresses to women dreamers.<sup>49</sup> *Oneirocriticon* 62, which refers to dreams of having one's breasts cut off, is probably also

---

46 See the interpretation of Artemidorus, *On*. 1.80 (Harris-McCoy, *Artemidorus' Oneirocritica*, 150), of sex with a corpse, other than one's mother, sister, wife or lover, as "very inauspicious. For the dead transform into earth, and penetrating them is nothing other than shoving oneself into the earth and being penetrated is nothing other than receiving earth into one's body."

47 The striking contrast of 425 and 374 (the previous example) with 348 indicates that this work is a synthesis of other sources, and its author did not seek to maintain internal consistency.

48 Translations of Daniel, *On*. are from Oberhelman, *Dreambooks*, with modifications noted in square brackets. Numbers 348–53, 355, and 357 all concern sex.

49 Daniel, *On*. 96 and 97, both cited above (Oberhelman, *Dreambooks*, 72).

directed at women dreamers. Other interpretations could refer to either male or female dreamers, for example, dreaming of having sex with a dead person. Oberhelman notes that in some dream key manuals dream symbols are listed with alternative interpretations depending on the category of dreamer; these categories are usually expressed as binaries, e.g. rich/poor; free-born/slave; male/female; and healthy/ill.<sup>50</sup>

Oberhelman remarks that dream key manuals “helped regulate proper sexual conduct by warning women not to overstep boundaries or to beware the consequences of impropriety.”<sup>51</sup> However, it seems from Daniel’s *Oneirocriticon* that men were not subject to the same boundaries. Male dreams of ‘disorderly sex’, including having sexual intercourse with an old woman, a married woman, a concubine, or a prostitute, indicated to Daniel the completion of some activity or the acquisition of profit. Equally, ‘orderly’ male sex with a prostitute or one’s own wife was taken to be a good omen. The double standard is particularly obvious in the interpretation of adulterous dreams: sex with a man/woman other than one’s spouse. This portends illness for a female dreamer but good profit for a male dreamer. Incest was condemned for both genders (except surprisingly for sex with one’s mother), as indicating separation or distress, but this is mentioned only twice in Daniel’s *Oneirocriticon*,<sup>52</sup> and was taboo also in Artemidorus, who saw it as a sexual act against convention, although not ‘unnatural’.<sup>53</sup>

## 5 Different Schools of Dream Theory

In Leslie Dossey’s recent article about the discipline and control of sleep in Greco-Roman philosophy and late antique Christianity, she identifies two different schools of thought on sleep and consequently dreams, which roughly correspond with Latin and Greek, whether Christian or non-Christian.<sup>54</sup>

50 Oberhelman, *Dreambooks*, 57. Daniel does discriminate meanings for slaves in *On.* 6 (Oberhelman, *Dreambooks*, 60), *On.* 190 (Oberhelman, *Dreambook*, 83), *On.* 430 (Oberhelman, *Dreambook*, 107); for the sick in *On.* 14 (Oberhelman, *Dreambook*, 61), and for rich/poor in *On.* 392 (Oberhelman, *Dreambook*, 105).

51 *Ibid.*, 73, n.119.

52 Daniel, *On.* 344 (Oberhelman, *Dreambooks*, 99): Going to bed with one’s daughter or sister indicates separation; but cf. *On.* 364 (Oberhelman, *Dreambooks*, 103): sex with your mother, even if she is dead [i.e. in real life], signifies gain.

53 Oberhelman, *Dreambooks*, 99, n.361. See Artemidorus, *On.* 78–80, and commentary by Harris-McCoy, *Artemidorus’ Oneirocritica*, 461–64.

54 Dossey, “Watchful Greeks,” 211.

Can this distinction help us understand the apparent disparity between Gregory's *Dialogues* and Daniel's *Oneirocriticon*?

### 5.1 *The 'Greek' School: Platonists and Galenists*

One broad school of medical practitioners and philosophers, which Dossey identified as 'Greek', followed Plato's thinking that the mind stayed awake while the body went to sleep. This 'Greek' school of thought included Hellenistic medical practitioners before Galen. It was suspicious of sleep and negative towards dreams also, in which the irrational part of the soul might lead the mind astray. The irrational or appetitive part of the soul, if allowed to get the upper hand, could induce dreams of evil acts like incest and bestiality.<sup>55</sup> Plato left the door open for true revelatory dreams but urged light sleep, and staying awake as much as possible.<sup>56</sup>

Plato's doctrine that the irrational part of the soul needed to be kept under control of the mind, especially in deep sleep, was accepted neo-Platonising Christians (e.g., Athanasius of Alexandria and the seventh-century monk Anastasius of Sinai, but also Ambrose of Milan) and by middle Platonists (e.g., the Jewish philosopher Philo of Alexandria, and later, in the fourth century, the pagan philosopher Porphyry). But Neo-Platonists also taught that the rational part of the soul, the awake mind (*νοῦς*), could access pure knowledge in sleep, as if freed from its fetters. The later (Neo-) Platonists would have had difficulty even conceding that the purified *νοῦς* could be affected by sleep. For them, a purified mind did not lose consciousness, or give in to sleep. The mind was able to rise above the pull of sleep, and do the spiritual work of contemplation. This was not the same thing, however, as dreaming.

Other Greeks followed the model of the second-century CE physician Galen, who followed the Aristotelian conception that the mind or brain, rather than the heart, was "the seat of both perception and reason."<sup>57</sup> According to Galen, it was the mind that fell asleep, not the body, allowing the faculties of desire and imagination (or envisioning) to run rampant, and to lead the philosopher (and later the Christian monk) astray. Dream images were evidence for such Greeks (after Galen) of the irrational nature of sleep, when the mind shut down and let the irrational faculties of the lower soul run riot, or even be subject to demons. The easiest way to avoid this was to sleep less and avoid deep

55 Plato, *Resp.* 9 571c–d; cited by Dossey, "Watchful Greeks," 218, n.35; and Stewart, "Erotic Dreams," 285. This seems to be predicated on the assumption that incest and bestiality is what people really desire.

56 Dossey, "Watchful Greeks," 222.

57 *Ibid.*, 214. See also Oberhelman, *Dreambooks*, 43–44.

sleep. Most Greek Christian ascetics adopted punitive practices of sleep deprivation, following this model. These Greeks were more sceptical than Romans about the value of sleep, and ‘if anything the opposite’ about dreams.<sup>58</sup> Even the Latin father Ambrose “adopts the Greek view that sleep can impair the ability of the mind to function.”<sup>59</sup> For Ambrose, it was sleep of the mind, not sleep of the body, that posed a moral danger to Christians.

### 5.2 *Stoic School in the Late Antique West*

For most late-antique Romans who wrote on the subject of sleep and dreaming, perhaps following the Hellenistic Greek school of medical thought that predominated in Rome before Galen, the mind stayed wide awake while the body slept. This belief, similar to the teaching of Plato, probably came from the Stoics of the third to first centuries BCE.<sup>60</sup> This was the attitude of the North African father Tertullian, for instance, who identified just three causes of dreams: dreams from God, dreams from a daemon, and dreams from the soul.<sup>61</sup> The role of *daemones* in the second category was later usurped by the devil and his demons in Christian writings.<sup>62</sup> Tertullian also asserted that, “We will no more be condemned for a dream of a shameful act, than we will be crowned for a dream of martyrdom.”<sup>63</sup> This school viewed sleep positively as being productive for rest, but was sceptical about the value of dreams, during which the mind was free to roam unchecked.<sup>64</sup> The view that sleep itself is benign and useful, even for monks, is obvious in *Regula magistri*, which allowed monks to sleep for seven hours straight, an unheard-of indulgence for eastern ascetics. *Regula magistri* inspired the sixth-century Benedictine rule, which in turn was an influence on the rule adopted by Gregory at St Andrew’s monastery, before he became bishop of Rome in 590.

The fourth-century philosopher and poet Lactantius was one of the leading adherents of this ‘Roman’ model. Lactantius suggested that dreams were sometimes sent by God and sometimes constructed by the soul.<sup>65</sup> However, sleep

58 Dossey, “Watchful Greeks,” 211, n.8.

59 Ibid., 230.

60 On the Stoic philosophy of dreams and their interpretation see Miller, *Dreams in Late Antiquity*, 52–55; and Oberhelman, *Dreambooks*, 41.

61 Tertullian, *De an.* 47.1–3 (CCL 2.853). See Stroumsa, “Dreams and Visions,” 196–97, 200, and 204; and Dossey, “Watchful Greeks,” 227 and 229.

62 Oberhelman, *Dreambooks*, 41.

63 Tertullian, *De an.* 45.4 (CCL 2.850): “non magis enim ob stupri uisionem damnabimur quam ob martyrii coronabimur.”

64 See Harris, *Dreams and Experience*, 174–84.

65 Lactantius, *De opif.* 18.9 (CSEL 27/1.58); cited by Dossey, “Watchful Greeks,” 228.



was not in itself benign for Lactantius. It could pose a risk to one's life because the body alone rested during sleep, while the restless soul remained in motion, needing to occupy itself in some way lest it depart from the body altogether, resulting in death. Therefore the soul drew into itself and imagined 'fantasies' (Gk. φαντασία, often translated 'imagination'; Dossey prefers 'envisioning'). It "exercises its own nature and motion in a variety of visions and calls itself away from falsities . . . while the bodily parts are satisfied and take strength from the rest."<sup>66</sup> Dreams were not, for Lactantius, "an irrational product of one's lower nature; the soul is in full control of its faculties."<sup>67</sup> Lactantius' belief that dreams were a necessary part of sleep had possible Stoic antecedents, according to Dulaey.<sup>68</sup> Similarly, for Augustine, the mind, separated from the sensory perceptions in sleep, retained its full rational and perceptive powers.

Both Lactantius and Augustine, it seems, adopted Neo-Platonic thinking on this question, thus confounding any neat distinction between Greek and Roman theories of sleep. Ambrose also crossed the boundary with his exegesis. When he wrote in *Hymn* 4.21–24, "Do not let your mind sleep; rather let sin know sleep,"<sup>69</sup> he seems to be suggesting that there is some rational control at work, and elsewhere he insists that such rational control can be facilitated by reciting the Psalms and the Lord's Prayer before deep sleep takes hold.<sup>70</sup> Both of these texts—*Hymn* 4 and the tract *De uirginibus*—are addressed to lay audiences, albeit to those considering consecrated virginity in the latter instance. Augustine followed his teacher Ambrose (and also Tertullian) in viewing sleep as beneficial both for the body and for the soul, releasing the mind from anxiety and tiredness. This is clear from Augustine's *De immortalitate* 13.22 and *Enarrationes in Psalmos* 62.4, where he was clearly drawing on a Middle-Platonic theory of sleep.<sup>71</sup>

The similarities between Ambrose, Lactantius, Augustine, and later Gregory, are striking, and perhaps reflect the fact that they were addressing a wider audience than the authors of Greek monastic texts. For ordinary people, sleep was a good that gave rest to the body, and an opportunity to commune with

66 Lactantius, *De ir.* 17.3 (SC 289.172–74): "ut naturalem suum motum exercent uarietate uisionum, auocatque se a falsis, dum membra saturantur ac uigorem capiant de quietate."

67 Dossey, "Watchful Greeks," 228.

68 Martine Dulaey, *Le Rêve dans la vie et la pensée de saint Augustin*, CEASA, vol. 50 (Paris: Études augustiniennes, 1973), 57–61, cited by Dossey, "Watchful Greeks," 228, n.81.

69 Cited by Dossey, "Watchful Greeks," 231 and n.94.

70 Ambrose, *De uirg.* 3.4.19 (SAEMO 14/1.224), cited by Dossey, "Watchful Greeks," 232 and n.96.

71 Dulaey, *Le Rêve*, 96, traces Augustine's sleep theory back to Porphyry in these instances.

God in dreams and visions. While Gregory recognised that the state of the body could impact on dreams, producing images that were in no way divinely inspired, he also recognised that a soul could receive various kinds of dreams and visions, some of them divine, others from the devil and his demons, and that the mind's thoughts could shape these visions. The most important criterion was the purity of the dreamer's soul. To this extent, all four belonged to the Platonic tradition with an admixture of Stoicism.

In regard to dreams, however, Gregory's views seem to resist classification into any of the models posited by Dossey. He was sceptical about the meaning of lower types of dream, caused by imbalances in the body (types 1 and 2), while allowing for a positive reception of divine revelation by purified souls (types 5 and 6). The remaining two types (3 and 4), in which the sleeper's mind was invaded by demons, represent an intermediate state of being open to the spiritual world while being unable to repel demonic images or thoughts. The mind was active in types 4 and 6.

The distinction posited by Dossey between Greek and Roman medically-based approaches to the moral value of sleep and dreams also cannot account for the production of dream key manuals like *Oneirocriticon* of Daniel. Nor did this work of the fourth century fit into any kind of Christian moral system. Rather, it bears all the hallmarks of pagan oneiromancy, whereby dreams are treated as amoral, and what we could call an 'evil' dream with improper sexual content could be a good omen for the future. Incest is the only exception, and this is not surprising given the longstanding cultural taboo around this subject, even in Greco-Roman culture. Perhaps Daniel's lack of concern with sexual morality can be attributed to the fact that his work was not necessarily meant for monks but for a lay audience. Gregory's *Dialogi*, on the other hand, were intended for both a lay and monastic audience. Unlike Daniel's *Oneirocriticon*, Gregory's *Dialogi* offered an evaluation of the causes of dreams, and Gregory was absolutely positive about the higher types, dreams involving divine revelation.

The western church's approach to dreaming was to avoid proscription. Daniel's *Oneirocriticon*, after being suppressed in the East, enjoyed wide popularity in the West through the Latin translation made in the seventh century. Gregory's *Dialogi*, translated into Greek by Pope Zacharias (741–752), quickly became a favourite among Greek readers.<sup>72</sup> The work was taken up by Paul Evergetinus, founder of the monastery of *Theotokos Evergetis* in Constantinople (d. 1054), in a work devoted to progress in the monastic life,

---

72 Andrew Louth, "Gregory the Great in the Byzantine Tradition," in Neil and dal Santo, *A Companion to Gregory the Great*, 347–48.

although its readership was probably not confined to monks.<sup>73</sup> Paul's *Synagoge* presented a florilegium of various authors, including many passages of *Dialogi*, taken mostly from book 4, to illustrate Gregory's views on the soul and its continuation after death. Many of Paul's passages from Gregory illustrate premonitions of death through visions of Christ, Mary, saints, angels, and heavenly music and fragrances. The reason the righteous receive visions of saints who have gone before is "so that they do not fear the penal sentence of their death", says Paul, quoting Gregory (*Dial.* 4.12).<sup>74</sup> In spite or because of the Byzantine proscription of dreambooks, the popularity of *Dialogi* in their Greek version proves that monastic and lay interest in interpreting their dreams was not easily suppressed.

### Conclusion

The survival and circulation of Daniel's dream key manual in a Latin translation from the seventh century, just at the time that such books disappeared from eastern circulation, demonstrates an ongoing interest in dream interpretation that the Byzantine church, despite its stern warnings against the dangers of interpretation of dreams by anyone other than a saint, was unable to stamp out. In identifying dreams as possible vehicles of divine revelation, Gregory the Great set the example for the medieval use of the trope of God, or his angels or saints, appearing to give instruction or direction to even the most unsaintly dreamer. In this respect, Gregory may be seen as typical of the western appropriation of its Greco-Roman oneirocritical heritage, whereby dreams were encouraged as an integral part of the Christian life, especially in monastic contexts. The *Dialogi* of Gregory continued to flourish across medieval Europe, becoming Gregory's most copied work, second only in popularity to Augustine's *De ciuitate Dei*, if one can judge medieval popularity by the number of copies surviving today. This was ultimately a more successful strategy for shaping Christian identity than the Byzantine attempt to stamp out dream interpretation altogether. In the late ninth century, the emperor Leo VI allowed dreambooks to flourish again, although they were now attributed to the Constantinopolitan patriarchs, Germanus and Nicephorus I. Daniel's

73 See Louth, "Gregory the Great," 350–56, esp. 350.

74 Paul Evergetinus, *Synagoge* 1.7 (Monastery of the Transfiguration of the Savior, ed., *Euergetinos ētoi Synagōgē tōn theophthoggōn rhēmatōn kai didaskaliōn tōn Theophorōn kai hagiōn Paterōn*, vol. 1, 6th ed. [Athens: Matthaion Laggēn, 1966], 102–19).

*Oneirocriticon*, 'at least in its original form', was not revived, being judged 'too pagan' for middle Byzantine Christian tastes.<sup>75</sup>

### Bibliography

- Ambrose. *De uirginibus* (Franco Gori, ed., *Verginità et vedovanza: Tutte le opere di Sant'Ambrogio*, SAEMO, vol. 14/1, 16–106. Milan: Biblioteca Ambrosiana, 1989).
- Artemidorus. *Oneirocritica* (Daniel E. Harris-McCoy, ed. and trans., *Artemidorus' Oneirocritica: Text, Translation, and Commentary*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012).
- Augustine. *Opera* (*Opere di Sant'Agostino*, NBA, 44 vols. Rome: Città Nuova Editrice, 1965–2007).
- Daniel the Prophet. *Oneirocriticon* (Stephen M. Oberhelman, trans., *Dreambooks in Byzantium: Six Oneirocritica in Translation, with Commentary and Introduction*, 59–115. Abingdon: Ashgate, 2008).
- Daniel the Prophet. *Somniale* (Lawrence T. Martin, ed., *The Somniale Danielis: An Edition of a Medieval Latin Dream Interpretation Handbook*, Lateinische Sprache und Literatur des Mittelalters, Bd. 10. Lang: Frankfurt, 1981).
- Gregory I. *Dialogorum libri iv* (Adalbert de Vogüé and Paul Antin, eds and trans., *Grégoire le Grand. Dialogues*, SC, vols 251, 260, and 265. Paris: Éditions du Cerf, 1978–1980. English translation in Odo J. Zimmerman, trans., *Saint Gregory the Great: Dialogues*, Fathers of the Church, vol. 39. Washington D.C.: Catholic University of America Press, 1959).
- Lactantius. *De opificio Dei; Divinarum institutionum libri vii; De ira Dei* (S. Brandt and G. Laubmann, eds, *L. Caeli Firmiani Lactantii Opera Omnia*, CSEL, vols 19 and 27/1–2. Vienna: Tempsky, 1890–1893).
- Paul Evergetinus. *Synagoge* (Monastery of the Transfiguration of the Savior, ed. and trans., *Euergetinos ētoi Synagōgē tōn theophthoggōn rhēmātōn kai didaskaliōn tōn Theophorōn kai hagiōn Paterōn*, 4 vols. 6th ed. Athens: Matthaion Laggēn, 1966–1978).
- Plato. *Respublica* (English translation in Paul Shorey, *Plato. The Republic*, LCL, 2 vols. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1953–1956).
- Tertullian. *De anima* (J.H. Waszink, ed., "Q.S.F. Tertulliani. De anima." In *Quinti Septimi Florentis Tertulliani Opera*, part 2: *Opera Montanistica*, CCL, vol. 2, 779–869. Turnhout: Brepols, 1954).

---

75 Oberhelman, *Dreambooks*, 56.

- Amat, Jacqueline. *Songes et visions: l'au-delà dans la littérature latine tardive*, CEASA, vol. 109. Paris: Études augustiniennes, 1985.
- Brakke, David. "The Problematicization of Nocturnal Emissions in Early Christian Syria, Egypt, and Gaul." *J ECS* 3 (1995): 419–60.
- . "The Making of Monastic Demonology: Three Ascetic Teachers on Withdrawal and Resistance." *CH* 70 (2001): 19–48.
- Clark, Francis. *The Pseudo-Gregorian Dialogues*, 2 vols. Leiden: Brill, 1987.
- Consolino, Franca Ela. "Sogni e visioni nell'agiographia tardoantica: modelli e variazioni sul tema," *Aug* 29 (1989): 237–56.
- Dossey, Leslie. "Watchful Greeks and Lazy Romans: Disciplining Sleep in Late Antiquity." *J ECS* 21 (2013): 209–39.
- Dulaey, Martine. *Le Rêve dans la vie et la pensée de saint Augustin*, CEASA, vol. 50. Paris: Études augustiniennes, 1973.
- Elliott, Dyan. *Fallen Bodies: Pollution, Sexuality and Demonology*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1999.
- Graf, Fritz. "Dreams, Visions, and Revelations: Dreams in the Thought of the Latin Fathers." In *Sub Imagine Somni: Nighttime Phenomena in Greco-Roman Culture*, edited by Emma Scioli and Christine Wade, 211–31. Pisa: Edizioni ETS, 2010.
- Gregory, Tullio, ed. *I Sogni nel Medioevo. Seminario internazionale Roma, 2–4 ottobre 1983*, Lessico intellettuale Europeo, vol. 35. Rome: Edizioni dell'Ateneo, 1985.
- Hanson, J.S. "Dreams and Visions in the Graeco-Roman World and Early Christianity." In *Aufstieg und Niedergang der römischen Welt*, part 2, vol. 23/2, edited by Wolfgang Haase, 1395–427. Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1980.
- Harris, William V. *Dreams and Experience in Classical Antiquity*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2009.
- Harrison, Juliette. *Dreams and Dreaming in the Roman Empire: Cultural Memory and Imagination*. London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2013.
- Kazhdan, Alexander, ed. *The Oxford Dictionary of Byzantium*, 3 vols. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991.
- Kenny, Margaret. "Distinguishing Between Dreams and Visions in Ninth-Century Hagiography." *Gouden Hoorn: Tijdschrift over Byzantium* 4/1 (1996): <http://www.isidore-of-seville.com/goudenhoorn/41margaret.html> (accessed 13.9.13).
- Kruger, Steven F. *Dreaming in the Middle Ages*, Cambridge Studies in Medieval Literature, vol. 14. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992.
- Lake, Stephen. "Hagiography and the Cult of Saints." In *A Companion to Gregory the Great*, edited by Bronwen Neil and Matthew dal Santo, 225–46. Leiden: Brill, 2013.
- Lamoreaux, John C. *The Early Muslim Tradition of Dream Interpretation*. Albany, N.Y.: SUNY Press, 2002.
- Le Goff, Jacques. "Le christianisme et les rêves (11<sup>e</sup>–VII<sup>e</sup> siècles)." In *I Sogni nel Medioevo. Seminario internazionale Roma, 2–4 ottobre 1983*, Lessico intellettuale Europeo, vol. 35, edited by Tullio Gregory, 171–218. Rome: Edizioni dell'Ateneo, 1985.

- Louth, Andrew. "Gregory the Great in the Byzantine Tradition." In *A Companion to Gregory the Great*, edited by Bronwen Neil and Matthew dal Santo, 343–58. Leiden: Brill, 2013.
- MacAlister, Suzanne. "Gender as Sign and Symbolism in Artemidorus' *Oneirocritica*: Social Aspirations and Anxieties." *Helion* 19 (1992): 140–60.
- Mavroudi, Maria. *A Byzantine Book on Dream Interpretation: The Oneirocriticon of Achmet and its Arabic Sources*, The Medieval Mediterranean: Peoples, Economics and Cultures 400–1453, vol. 36. Leiden: Brill, 2002.
- Mews, Constant J. and Claire Renkin. "The Legacy of Gregory the Great in the Latin West." In *A Companion to Gregory the Great*, edited by Bronwen Neil and Matthew dal Santo, 315–42. Leiden: Brill, 2013.
- Miller, Patricia Cox. *Dreams in Late Antiquity: Studies in the Imagination of a Culture*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994.
- Moreira, Isabel. "Dreams and Divination in Early Medieval Canonical and Narrative Sources: The Question of Clerical Control." *CHR* 89 (2003): 621–42.
- Näf, Beat. *Traum und Traumdeutung im Altertum*. Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 2004.
- Niehoff, Maren. "A Dream which is not Interpreted is Like a Letter which is not Read." *JJS* 43 (1992): 58–84.
- Oberhelman, Steven M. *Dreambooks in Byzantium: Six Oneirocritica in Translation, with Commentary and Introduction*. Abingdon: Ashgate, 2008.
- Oberhelman, Steven M. ed., *Dreams, Healing, and Medicine in Greece: From Antiquity to the Present*. Farnham: Ashgate, 2013.
- Sirriyeh, Elizabeth. "Muslims Dreaming of Christians, Christians Dreaming of Muslims," *Islam and Muslim-Christian Relations* 17 (2006): 207–21.
- Stewart, Charles. "Erotic Dreams and Nightmares from Antiquity to the Present." *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute* 8 (2002): 279–309.
- Stroumsa, Guy G. "Dreams and Visions in Early Christian Discourse." In *Dream Cultures: Explorations in the Comparative History of Dreaming*, edited by David Dean Shulman and Guy G. Stroumsa, 189–212. New York: Oxford University Press, 1999.

# Shaping Coptic Christian Identity: Severus and the Adoption in Egypt of the Cult of the Forty Martyrs

*Youhanna Nessim Youssef*

## 1 Introduction

In an early article, Jean Simon highlighted the importance of the veneration of the forty martyrs of Sebaste in Christian Egypt,<sup>1</sup> yet he did not mention any relation to Severus of Antioch. On the other hand, in his important study about the contact and exchange between the Copts and Syrians, which was centred from the eighth century onwards in the Wadi-Natrun in the monastery of the Syrians (Dayr as-Suryān),<sup>2</sup> while Jean-Maurice Fiey noted that in both the Syrian and Coptic festal calendars some saints have their commemoration on the same day, he made no mention of these forty martyrs.<sup>3</sup> Their cult, we shall argue, is one more example of how in Egypt hagiography was employed in the service of shaping Egyptian (most notably non-Chalcedonian) Christian identity, in this case through the liturgical attribution of the cult to the Syrian exemplar of non-Chalcedonian orthodoxy, Severus of Antioch. This aligns with the findings of an earlier article in which we demonstrated how the veneration of Saints Sergius and Bacchus was introduced to Egypt by Severus.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Jean Simon, “Le culte des XL Martyrs dans l’Égypte chrétienne,” *Orientalia* 3 (1934): 174–76.

<sup>2</sup> On this monastery and its role in Syro-Coptic relations see Johannes den Heijer, “Relations between Copts and Syrians in the Light of Recent Discoveries at Dayr as-Suryān,” in *Coptic Studies on the Threshold of a New Millennium II. Proceedings of the Seventh International Congress of Coptic Studies, Leiden 2000*, ed. M. Immerzeel et al., OLA, vol. 133 (Leuven: Peeters, 2004), 923–38, and literature.

<sup>3</sup> Jean-Maurice Fiey, “Coptes et syriaques, contacts et échanges,” *SOC* 15 (1972–1973): 295–366, esp. 304–306.

<sup>4</sup> Youhanna Nessim Youssef, “The Role of Severus of Antioch in the Dialogue between Greek, Coptic and Syriac Cultures,” *POR* 31 (2006): 163–84. Fiey, “Coptes et syriaques,” 315, similarly argued that Severus was responsible for the introduction of the cult of his patron, St Leontius of Tripoli.



## 2 The Coptic Church in the Wake of the Arab Conquest

As Arietta Papaconstantinou, in particular, has argued, in the seventh to eighth centuries CE, when Egypt came under Umayyad and then 'Abāssid rule, the construction of a martyr past for Egypt emerged as a result of "the Egyptian Miaphysite (non-Chalcedonian) church searching for a new identity and a new legitimacy. In this quest it was important to that church to mark its indigenous origin."<sup>5</sup> Ties at a regional and local level between the non-Chalcedonians in Egypt and Syria were at that point in time strong, as attested by the exchange of synodical letters between the two prelates of the Antiochene and Alexandrian churches, part of which survives in *The Book of the Confessions of the Fathers*.<sup>6</sup> Antioch, as the seat of the non-Chalcedonian patriarch Severus (512–518 CE), who had spent the bulk of his exile in Egypt leading up to his summons to Constantinople in 534 to negotiate with Emperor Justinian,<sup>7</sup> took on in this period a particularly symbolic role. This is exemplified in the production in Egypt at this period of entire cycles in Coptic of stories of saints martyred during the persecution of Diocletian in either Antioch or Egypt with ties to both regions, but no actual historical foundation.<sup>8</sup> By locating the saints of this

5 Arietta Papaconstantinou, "Historiography, Hagiography, and the Making of the Coptic 'Church of the Martyrs' in Early Islamic Egypt," *DOP* 60 (2006): 67. See also eadem, *Le culte des saints en Égypte des Byzantins aux Abassides. L'apport des inscriptions et des papyrus grecs et coptes*, Collection Le monde byzantin dirigée par Bernard Flusin (Paris: Persée, 2001), 32–33, on the introduction into a saint's life of a connection to Antioch as a means of increasing that saint's prestige.

6 See e.g., the letter from John IV of Alexandria (775–799) to Cyriacus of Antioch (see G. Graf, "Zwei dogmatische Florilegien der Kopten," *OCP* 3 [1937]: 345–402, esp. 395, number 209); and the letter sent by Cyriacus of Antioch to Mark of Alexandria (799–819) (Graf, "Zwei dogmatische Florilegien," 395, number 210). See also Youhanna Nessim Youssef, "The Quotations of Severus of Antioch in the Book of the Confessions of the Fathers," *ANES* 40 (2003): 178–229.

7 See Pauline Allen and C.T.R. Hayward, *Severus of Antioch*, The Early Church Fathers (London and New York: Routledge, 2004), 25–30.

8 For the Antioch cycle, which later developed into the Basilides cycle—Basilides, Anatolius the Persian, Eusebius, Macarius, Justus, Theodore the Oriental, Apater and Herai, and Claudius and Victor—see *BHO* 12 (Anatolius the Persian); *BHO* 292 (Eusebius); *BHO* 578 (Macarius); Eric O. Winstedt, *Coptic Texts on Saint Theodore the General, Saint Theodore the Eastern, Chamoul and Justus* (London and Oxford: Williams and Norgate, 1910), 188–99 and 211–21 (Justus); *BHO* 1174 (Theodore the Oriental); *BHO* 73 (Apater and Herai); *BHO* 195 (Claudius); E.A. Wallis Budge, ed. and trans., *Coptic Martyrdoms in the Dialect of Upper Egypt* (London: British Museum, 1914), 1–45 and 253–98 (Victor); and also Tito Orlandi, "Cycle," *Coptic Encyclopedia* 3.666–68; idem, "Hagiography, Coptic," *Coptic Encyclopedia* 4.1191–97; and Papaconstantinou, "Coptic 'Church of the Martyrs,'" 75 and 80.



'legend of Antioch' both within Antioch and at the time of Diocletian's persecution the authors claimed at one and the same time a line of descent for their church from a non-Chalcedonian heartland and from a period in the history of the Christian church (the 'era of the martyrs') that is considered foundational. The attribution in some instances of these hagiographical writings to Severus himself or to a pre-Chalcedonian 'orthodox' son of Antioch, John Chrysostom, added yet another layer of legitimisation.<sup>9</sup> The latter is in line with how, in (re)writing the ancestry of the Coptic patriarchate, the history produced in these first two centuries of Islamic rule in Egypt included the appropriation of key characters including not just Athanasius or Cyril of Alexandria, but even Basil of Caesarea and probably Gregory of Nazianzus.<sup>10</sup>

### 3 The Cult of the Forty Martyrs of Sebaste

In this context it is not surprising, then, to find hints of the attribution to Severus of Antioch of the introduction into the Coptic church of the cult of the forty martyrs, a cult that had by the mid-fifth century made its way from Cappadocia to Antioch,<sup>11</sup> and was itself first attested to by Basil of Caesarea and Gregory of Nyssa.

The cult of the forty martyrs of Sebaste (Armenia) is concerned with the veneration of forty soldiers who were brought together by their military service. Refusing to renounce their Christian faith during a period of imperial persecution they were tortured by being stripped bare in the middle of the city on a winter's night with bitter wind chill, as a consequence of which they froze slowly to death.<sup>12</sup> In the process one soldier deserted, but the number was miraculously restored when the executioner was converted by a vision and by the faithful witness of the others. This account, preserved in Basil's *Homily on the Forty Martyrs of Sebaste* (*Hom.* 19, *CPG* 2863),<sup>13</sup> later formed the basis

9 See Papaconstantinou, "Coptic 'Church of the Martyrs,'" 81, who points out that "All these elements reinforced the link the Coptic Church made with pre-Chalcedonian Christianity, so as to demonstrate its institutional continuity."

10 See *ibid.* regarding the list of monastic exemplars Samuel of Kalamun is said to have followed.

11 On the evidence for the celebration of the cult in Antioch by the 470s or 480s see Wendy Mayer and Pauline Allen, *The Churches of Syrian Antioch (300–638 CE)*, Late Antique History and Religion, vol. 5 (Leuven: Peeters, 2012), 49–51.

12 The Byzantine synaxaria identify the emperor as Licinius.

13 For the date and Basil's possible sources see the introduction to his translation of the homily by Johan Leemans in Johan Leemans et al., *'Let us die that we may live': Greek Homilies*

of Severus' own homily on the martyrs, delivered at Antioch during Lent on Saturday, 9 March 513.<sup>14</sup> A homily of Gregory of Nyssa on the forty martyrs also survives (*CPG* 3188–89).<sup>15</sup>

For the purposes of our argument, it is noteworthy that the earliest inscriptions and papyri that attest to the arrival of a cult of the forty martyrs in Egypt are dated to the seventh or eighth centuries.<sup>16</sup> The names of the forty martyrs of Sebasteia likewise appear at around this time in Coptic Christian spells.<sup>17</sup> Also significant, in terms of the links between Egypt and Syria at this period, if the identification is correct, is the presence of a chapel named after them in the Monastery of the Syrians (Dayr as-Suryān).<sup>18</sup> This appears to date from the

- 
- on Christian Martyrs from Asia Minor, Palestine and Syria (c. AD 350–AD 450)* (London and New York: Routledge, 2003), 67–68; and Patricia Karlyn-Hayter, "Passio of the XL Martyrs of Sebasteia, The Greek Tradition: The Earliest Account," *AB* 109 (1991): 249–304.
- 14 Severus, *Hom.* 18 (PO 37/1.6–23). See Frédéric N. Alpi, *La route royale: Sévère d'Antioche et les Églises d'Orient (512–518)*, vol. 1: *Texte*, BAH, vol. 188 (Beyrouth: Presses de l'Ifpo, 2009), 188–90. Severus also composed five hymns on the martyrs. See Ernest W. Brooks, *James of Edessa: The Hymns of Severus*, PO, vol. 9, (Turnhout: Brepols, 1911), 614–20.
- 15 On Gregory's framing of their martyrdom as part of an anti-heretical discourse at this early stage in the development of the cult see Ekkehard Mühlenberg, "Gregor von Nyssa über die Vierzig und den ersten Märtyrer (Stephanus)," in *Christian Martyrdom in Late Antiquity (300–450 AD): History and Discourse, Tradition and Religious Identity*, ed. Peter Gemeinhardt and Johan Leemans, AKG, Bd 116 (Berlin: Walter De Gruyter, 2012), 115–33. For the development of the cult in general see Pierre Maraval, "Les premiers développements du culte des XL martyrs de Sébastée dans l'orient byzantin et en occident," *VetChr* 36 (1999): 193–211.
- 16 Papaconstantinou, *Le culte des saints*, 197.
- 17 Angelicus M. Kropp, *Ausgewählte koptische Zaubertexte*, vol. 3: *Einleitung in koptische Zaubertexte* (Brussels: Edition de la Fondation égyptologie reine Elisabeth, 1930), 40–103; and see Papaconstantinou, *Le culte des saints*, 198 and 238, who mentions that the forty martyrs appear in lists used either as phylacteries or as a school exercise.
- 18 In publications by western scholars, this chapel is identified as that of the forty-nine martyrs: Hugh G. Evelyn White, *The Monasteries of the Wādi 'N Natrūn*, part 2: *The History of the Monasteries of Nitria and of Scetis*, The Metropolitan Museum of Art Egypt Expedition (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1932), 208–209; Gawdat Gabra, *Coptic Monasteries: Egypt's Monastic Art and Architecture* (Cairo and New York: American University in Cairo Press, 2002), 55; Peter Grossmann, "Dayr al-Suryan," *Coptic Encyclopedia* 3:876–81; Massimo Capuani et al., *Christian Egypt: Coptic Art and Monuments through Two Millennia* (Cairo: American University in Cairo Press, 2002), 98. Egyptian monastic monographs, such as 'Abd al-Masih al-Masu'udi's, *تحفة السائلين في ذكر أديرة رهبان المصريين* (*The Gem of those who ask in the Mentioning of the Monasteries of the Egyptian Monks*), 2nd ed. (Cairo: The Monastery of Baramūs, 1999), 67, and Samuel Tawadrus al-Surianī, *الأديرة المصرية العامرة* (*The Inhabited Egyptian Monasteries*) (Cairo, 1968), 148, on the

same period as a fragmentary homily on the martyrdom of the forty martyrs, dated to the tenth or eleventh century, that survives in Coptic in the collection of the John Rylands Library.<sup>19</sup> The story transmitted is close to the tradition witnessed to by Basil and later by Severus. Significantly the author recalls the words of Severus in one of his homilies on “the lights of the church.” Basil and Gregory (of Nazianzus).<sup>20</sup> Further folios of the homily have since come to light.<sup>21</sup>

#### 4 Coptic Liturgical Texts Relating to the Forty Martyrs

It is in the Coptic liturgical texts that we find the strongest suggestions of a direct link being drawn between the celebration of the cult in Severus’ time in Antioch and the manner in which the cult was adopted in Egypt. In a fifteenth-century manuscript of the *ordo* of the Coptic Church, their martyrdom occurs on 13 Baramhât and the consecration of their church on 15 Amšir. Of interest are the instructions concerning the exceptions that are to be made, should the feast of the forty martyrs fall during the Lenten fast, the significance of which will be discussed shortly.

---

other hand, identify the chapel with the forty martyrs of Sebaste. I am inclined to support the latter dedication for several reasons: 1. the presence of part of their relics in the monastery; 2. the monks recite everyday liturgical texts (Psalm, doxologies, etc.) relating to the forty martyrs of Sebaste; and 3. the manuscript collection of the monastery does not possess the acts of the forty-nine martyrs. See Youhanna Nessim Youssef, “The Monastery of Qalamun during the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Centuries,” in *Christianity and Monasticism in the Fayoum Oasis: Essays from the 2004 International Symposium of the Saint Mark Foundation and the Saint Shenouda the Archmandrite Coptic Society in Honor of Martin Krause*, ed. Gawdat Gabra (Cairo and New York: American University in Cairo Press, 2005), 91–102. See also Otto F.A. Meinardus, *Christian Egypt, Faith and Life* (Cairo: American University in Cairo Press, 1970), 191.

19 David Purdy Buckle, “The Forty Martyrs of Sebaste: A Study of Hagiographical Development,” *BJRL* 6 (1921–1922): 352–60.

20 See the text and translation in Buckle, “The Forty Martyrs,” 356. Severus delivered a number of homilies at Antioch in praise of Basil and Gregory. See Severus, *Hom.* 9 (PO 38/2.336–49); 37 (PO 36/3.474–87); 65 (PO 8/2.321–30); and 84 (PO 23/1.7–24).

21 See Enzo Lucchesi, “Les Quarante Martyrs de Sébaste. Un témoin copte inédit,” in *Aegyptus Christiana. Mélanges d'hagiographie égyptienne et orientale dédiés à la mémoire du P. Paul Devos Bollandiste*, ed. Ugo Zanetti and Enzo Lucchesi (Geneva: Patrick Cramer, 2004), 111–18; and idem, “L’encomion copte des XL Martyrs de Sébaste: un nouveau folio repéré à la Pierpoint Morgan Library,” *AB* 126 (2008): 178.

In what follows we refer to the book of the *ordo* of the church as it is attested in the manuscript Coptic Patriarchate 743 Liturgy 74. The full description in the catalogue is as follows:

THE SECOND PART OF THE PRECEDING MS (THE ORDO OF THE CHURCH) WITH AN INDEX (RUBRICS IN ARABIC).  
96 folios, 14 lines, 20 × 14cm. Some folios restored. Dated on folio 94(v) (A.M. 1161 which corresponds to A.H. 848 (A.D. 1444–1445). In the handwriting of Jeremiah (Armyâ) ibn al Qummus (name in Coptic).<sup>22</sup>

Graf did not provide the description of this manuscript. The book of the *ordo* of the church was published by the late bishop Samuel, who failed to note, however, that the following annotation appears in the original folios as well as the folio of restoration. The original manuscript fol. 195r–v reads:

ويتفق في أيام الصوم عاشر برمهات وجود الصليب المجيد يطل فيه لحن الصوم  
وكذلك النبوات وترتيبه كما شرح في سابع عشر توت ويتفق أيضا ثالث عشر برمهات  
عيد الأربعين شهيد بسبسية لحن الصوم فيه بطال والنبوات لكن اللحن سنوي  
ويقرأ<sup>23</sup> ميمهم وفصولهم

And during the days of the Lent [fasting] the 10th of Baramhât the feast of the glorious Cross and the prophecies. They are arranged according to what was explained in the 17th of Tût. And also the 13th of Baramhât, the feast of the forty martyrs of Sebaste, the tunes and also the prophecies of the Lent are not in use but the yearly tune and their biographies and the chapters are read.

The restored folio 183v reads:

ثالث عشر برمهات عيد الأربعين شهيد بسبسية لحن الصوم فيه بطال والنبوات  
لكن اللحن سنوي ويقرأ<sup>24</sup> ميمهم وفصولهم

22 M. Simaika and Yassa 'Abd al-Masih, *Catalogue of the Coptic and Arabic Manuscripts in the Coptic Museum, the Patriarchate, the Principal Churches of Cairo and Alexandria and the Monasteries of Egypt*, vol. 2, fasc. 1 (Cairo: Government Press, 1942), 339, Lit. 74.

23 Sic.

24 Sic.

The 13th Baramhât, the feast of the forty martyrs of Sebaste, the tunes and also the prophecies of Lent are not in use but the yearly tune and their biographies and the chapters are read.

Tarh Batos<sup>25</sup> fol. 195r-v.<sup>26</sup>

ΑΜΩΝΙ ΜΦΟΥΓ ΝΤΕΝΤΩΟΥ ΝΝΙΧΩΡΙ  
ΝΑΓΩΝΙΣΤΗΣ ΝΙΡΕΦΙΧΛΟΜ ΝΤΕ ΠΧ  
ΠΙΜ ΜΨΙ ΝΤΕ ΣΑΡΑΚΤΙΑ

Come today that we glorify the strong  
*combatants*, the receivers of the crown  
of *Christ*, the *martyrs* of Sebasta

Ω ΝΗΕΤΑΥΘΑΡΜΟΥ ΕΠΙΡΟΠ ΝΤΕ ΙΗΣ  
ΠΩΗΡΙ ΝΦΤ ΟΥΟΖ ΝΠΟΥΕΡΑΜΕΛΗΣ ΕΩΕ  
ΕΒΟΥΝ ΕΡΩΤΕΒ\* ΝΕΜΑΙ

O those who had been invited to the feast  
of Jesus the Son of God and were not  
*negligent* to enter to recline with Him

Ω ΝΗΕΤΑΣΒΕΒΙ ΣΑΒΟΥΝ ΜΜΩΟΥ ΝΧΕ  
ΤΑΓΑΠΗ ΝΠΧ ΝΦΡΗΤ ΝΟΥΜΟΥΝΙ  
ΜΜΩΟΥ ΕΣΒΑΤ ΝΟΥΩΝΒ ΝΕΝΕΖ

O those in whom the *Love* of *Christ* poured  
forth, like a spring of water flowing eternal  
life

Ω ΝΗΕΤΑΥΜΟΖ ΝΒΡΗ ΝΒΗΤΕΝ ΝΧΕ  
ΠΧΩΜ ΝΑΤΣΕΝΟ ΝΤΕ ΠΠΝΑ ΕΘΟΥΑΒ  
ΟΥΟΖ ΝΠΑΡΑΚΛΗΤΟΝ

O those in whom the unquenchable fire of  
the Holy *Spirit* and the *Comforter* flamed

Ω ΝΗΕΤΑΥΤΩΠΙ ΜΠΣΑΤΑΝΑΣ ΝΕΜ  
ΝΕΦΔΕΜΩΝ ΜΠΟΝΗΡΟΝ ΝΕΜ ΠΟΥΡΟ  
ΝΑΣΕΒΗΣ ΝΡΕΦΩΔΜΩΕ ΙΔΩΛΟΝ

O those who put to shame *Satan*, his *evil*  
*demons* and the *impious idolatrous king*

Ω ΝΗΕΤΑΥΩΠΙ ΕΥΤΑΧΡΗΟΥΤ ΖΙΧΕΝ  
ΤΟΜΟΛΟΓΙΑ ΝΤΕ ΠΙΝΑΖΤ ΕΤΣΟΥΤΩΝ  
ΟΥΟΖ ΝΑΠΟCΤΟΛΙΚΟΝ

O those who became firm in the *confession*  
of the straight and *apostolic* faith

ΩΟΥ ΝΗΕΤΑΥΡΟΧΡΕΧ ΜΜΩΟΥ ΞΕΝ  
ΝΙΔΙΚΑΣΤΗΡΙΟΝ ΕΘΒΕ ΠΙΝΑΖΤ ΝΑΤΡΙΚΙ  
ΝΤΕ ΤΤΡΙΑC ΕΘΥ

O those who had been distressed in the  
*courts of justice* for the unshakeable faith  
of the Holy *Trinity*

ΤΩΒΖ

Pray

25 For this kind of hymn see O.H.E. Burmester, "Tûrûhat of the Coptic Church," *OCF* 3 (1937): 78–109 and 505–49.

26 In our edition, following the Coptological tradition, the Greek loan words are put in italics, the \* is the end of the folio of the ms.

A much later manuscript of the *ordo* of the church, preserved in the collection of the monastery of St Antony (302 Lit.) attests to the continuation of the tradition of making an exception for the celebration of the feast of the forty martyrs, if it occurs during Lent.

15×21cm, 212 folios + 1 blank, titles in red ink.

Part one, from fol. 4: the order for the Eastertide, the genuflexion and from the 6 Bašans to 5 Nasî. Part two, from fol. 75: the order of the manuscript from the 12th Tûbah to 14th Amšîr and the order to the fasting of Nineva and the fasting of the holy forty days (Lent) and from the 3rd of Baramhât to 29th of Baramhât, which is the feast of annunciation. Part three, from fol. 148: doxologies, responses and Aspasmos from the 1st of Tût to the end of Hatûr. In a different hand.

On fol. 74 there is a note that in the year 1377 AM (= AD 1661) there were fifteen monks in the monastery and on fol. 75 there is a note that in the year 1609 AM (= AD 1893) there were thirty-four monks in the monastery.

This manuscript contains also a Tarh for the forty martyrs with the following note:

ويتفق في أيام الصوم عاشر برمهات وجود الصليب المجيد يبطل فيه لحن الصوم  
وكذلك النبوات وترتيبه كما شرح في سابع عشر توت **واذا اتفق هذا العيد أو عيد**  
**الاربعين شهيد أو عيد البشارة تاسع وعشرين من برمهات في يوم من أيام الجمعة**  
**يقروا النبوات في اليوم الذي قبله في صلاة باكر ولا يستعمل فيه الحان الصوم لكن**  
**سنوي ويقرا ميمر الاربعين شهيد وفصولهم . . .**

During the days of the lent [fasting] the 10th of Baramhât the feast of the invention of the glorious Cross, the tunes of Lent are not used and also the prophecies. The order is according to what was explained on the 17th Tût. If this feast or the feast of the forty martyrs or the feast of annunciation [falls] on the 29th of Barmhât in a day of the week, the prophecies were read on the previous day during the prayers of the matins and the tunes of the fast (Lent) are not used but the yearly (tune) and the mîmar of the forty martyrs is read and their chapters (of the lectionary)

ⲭⲉⲣⲉ ⲛⲟⲩⲉⲛ ⲱ ⲛⲓⲙⲁⲣⲧⲩⲣⲟⲥ ⲛⲓⲁⲒⲓⲐⲐ  
ⲛⲓⲙⲁⲣⲧⲩⲣⲟⲥ ⲛⲛⲉⲧⲗⲱⲗⲉ ⲃⲈⲚ ⲛⲓⲐⲟⲩⲱⲛⲓ  
ⲛ̀ ⲧⲉⲣⲓⲁⲥ ⲛ̀ⲣⲉⲩⲧⲁⲛⲃⲟ

Hail to you, O martyrs, those holy  
martyrs who are covered with the light  
of the life-giving Trinity

<p>хере нѡтен ѡ нѡфѡстѡр ннѡтерѡуѡнн          бѡн ѡгнѡмнн пп̄ н̄мартгрос н̄те          сапаста ннѡнра† н̄те п̄х̄</p>	<p><i>Hail to you, O truly bright stars, the forty          martyrs of Sebaste beloved of Christ</i></p>
<p>хере нѡтен ѡ н̄аѡлгтнс ѡдѡн п̄наз†          ѡтсѡгтѡн бѡн фран н̄†ѡрѡс ѡѡ̄ п̄п̄          н̄мартгрос</p>	<p><i>Hail to you, O champions of the straight          faith in the name of the holy Trinity, the          forty martyrs</i></p>
<p>агеркагафроннн н̄паѡкосмос нем          пѡфѡу ѡнагако агѡи н̄пѡхлом н̄те          †метнартгрос агѡаѡнн н̄р̄анннѡ          н̄таѡ</p>	<p><i>They disdained this World and its          perishable glory and received the crown          of martyrdom and won great honour</i></p>
<p>а ѡгаггѡлѡс н̄те ф† ѡгѡнзѡ нѡѡу бѡн          ѡгзѡрѡма агмазѡу н̄хѡм нем ѡгнѡм†          бѡн нѡг†гхн нем нѡгсѡма</p>	<p><i>An Angel of God appeared to them in a          dream and filled their souls and their          bodies with strength and comfort</i></p>
<p>агерѡмѡлогнн н̄н̄с ѡѡѡ ѡѡл н̄паѡрн†          хѡ анѡн р̄анхрѡстѡнос ѡгназ† н̄ф†          н̄те немѡ†</p>	<p><i>They confessed Jesus, proclaiming in          such a way: “We are Christians believing          in the God of our Fathers”</i></p>
<p>т̄ѡв̄р̄ . . . н̄аѡлѡфѡрос н̄мартгрос          п̄п̄ ѡѡ̄ н̄те сапаста н̄теѡ</p>	<p><i>Pray . . . O victorious martyrs, the holy          forty of Sebaste, in order that He . . .</i></p>

While the book of the *ordo* of the church implies a Severan source for the festival as the yearly tunes are used, the *Difnar*<sup>27</sup> has a Basilian source as we see in the first two stanzas of 15 *Amšir*:<sup>28</sup>

27 The *Difnar* is a liturgical book that contains a collection of hymns for the whole year. The hymns of the *Difnar* are sung in the service of the psalmodia, which follows compline after the Theotokia. The hymns are arranged according to the Coptic calendar. There are two hymns for each day, one in the *Batos* tune and the other in the *Adam* tune. The title of this book means that the hymns are sung antiphonally. See further Gawdat Gabra, “Untersuchungen zum *Difnar* der koptischen Kirche. I Quellenlage, Forschungsgeschichte und künftige Aufgaben,” *BSAC* 35 (1996): 37–52; and idem, “Untersuchungen zum *Difnar* der koptischen Kirche. II Zur Kompilation,” *BSAC* 37 (1998): 49–68.

28 De Lacy O’Leary, *The Difnar (Antiphonarium) of the Coptic Church*, vol. 2 (London: Luzac, 1927), 46.

ΟΥΟΣ ΞΕΝ ΠΑΙΕΞΟΥ ΕΘΥ ΠΕ  
ΠΙΧΙΝΕΡΑΓΙΑΖΙΝ ΝΤΩΟΡΠ ΝΕΚΚΛΗΝΙΑ  
ΜΠΙΝ ΕΘΥ ΝΜΑΡΤΥΡΟΣ

And on this holy day is the *consecration*  
of the first *church* of the forty holy  
*martyrs*

ΝΤΕ ΣΑΒΑΣΤΗ ΨΒΑΚΙ ΘΗΕΤΑΥΚΟΤΣ ΕΧΕΝ  
ΝΟΥΡΑΝ ΔΦΕΡΑΓΙΑΖΙΝ ΜΜΟΝ ΝΧΕ ΠΙΝΙΩΨ  
ΒΑΣΙΛΙΟΣ

Of the *city* Sebaste, that was built after  
their names and was *consecrated* by  
Basil the Great

ΑΓΤΑΟΥΩ ΝΖΔΝΕΠΕΝΟΣ ΕΥΤΟΜΙ ΕΤΟΥΜΙ  
ΕΤΟΥΜΕΤΝΙΩΨ ΔΦΕΡΩΔΙ ΝΩΟΥ ΝΨΡΗ  
ΝΨΗΤΣ ΕΡΕ ΠΟΥΣΜΟΥ ΩΩΠ ΝΕΜΑΝ

He delivered *panegyrics* worthy of their  
greatness. He celebrated for them in  
it (the church); may their blessing be  
with us.

ΤΩΒΞ ΝΠΩΣ ΕΖΡΗΙ ΕΧΕΩΝ ΠΙΝ ΕΘΥ  
ΝΜΑΡΤΥΡΟΣ ΝΕΜ ΠΑΓΙΟΣ ΠΑΦΝΟΥΘΙΟΣ  
ΝΤΕΦΧΑ ΝΕΝΝΟΒΙ

Pray to the Lord on our behalf, forty  
*martyrs* and *saint* Paphnutius, in order  
that He forgives our sins

Here the Psali Adam of the Difnar for 13 Baramhat preserves many of the elements of the story (their identity as soldiers, their confession “We are Christians,” their imprisonment and torture, the lake, and their death by freezing) as related by Basil and subsequently Severus.<sup>29</sup> The Difnar reads:

ΨΑΛΙ ΗΧΟΣ ΔΔΑΜ<sup>30</sup>

*Psali Adam*

ΝΙΑΘΛΙΓΗΤΣ ΝΧΩΡΙ ΜΜΑΤΟΙ ΝΓΕΝΝΕΟΣ  
ΜΠΙΝ ΜΑΡΤΥΡΟΣ ΝΤΕ ΣΑΒΑΣΤΗ

The strong *athletes*, the *noble* soldiers the  
forty *martyrs* of Sebaste

ΑΥΕΡΣΥΜΦΩΝΙΝ ΞΕΝ ΟΥΖΗΤ ΝΟΥΩΤ  
ΕΩΤΕΜΕΡΜΑΤΟΙ ΧΕ ΝΝΙΟΥΡΩΟΥ ΝΔΣΕΒΗΣ

They *agreed* with one heart not to be  
soldiers for the *impious* kings

29 For the same features of the story preserved and transmitted in the Coptic homily on the martyrs see Buckle, “The Forty Martyrs,” 355–56.

30 See also O.H.E. Burmester, “The Turûhât of the Saints II (Kyahk-An-Nasi),” *BSAC* 5 (1939): 84–157, esp. 137; and O’Leary, *The Difnar* 2.72–73.



<p>ΑΛΛΑ ΕΘΡΟΥΩΩΠΙ Μ̅ΜΑΤΟΙ Μ̅ΠΧ̅ ΠΟΥΡΟ ΝΤΦΕ ΝΕΜ ΠΚΑΖΙ Ν̅CΕ† ΕΖΡΗΙ ΕΧΩΦ</p>	<p><i>But to become soldiers for Christ the King of Heaven and earth in order to fight for Him</i></p>
<p>ΑΥ† ΜΠΟΥΟΥΟΙ ΉΕΝ ΟΥΝΙΩ† Μ̅ΜΕΤΧΩΡΙ ΑΥΟΥΖΙ ΕΡΑΤΟΥ Μ̅ΠΕΜΘΟ Μ̅ΠΙΒΗΜΑ</p>	<p><i>They advanced in great might and they stood in front of the <i>tribune</i></i></p>
<p>ΑΥΩΩ ΕΒΟΛ ΤΗΡΟΥ ΉΕΝ ΟΥΪΡΩΟΥ Ν̅ΟΥΩΤ ΧΕ ΔΝΟΝ ΖΑΝΜΑΤΟΙ Ν̅ΤΕ Ι̅Η̅C Π̅Χ̅C</p>	<p><i>They all cried out with one voice: “We are soldiers of Jesus Christ”</i></p>
<p>ΕΤΑΦΧΩΝΤ ΕΜΑΩΩ Ν̅ΧΕ ΠΙΖΗΓΕΜΩΝ ΑΦΡΙΤΟΥ ΕΠΙΩΤΕΚΟ ΕΕΡΔΙΜΩΡΙΝ Μ̅ΜΩΟΥ</p>	<p><i>The <i>ruler</i> became extremely angry and threw them in prison to <i>punish</i> them</i></p>
<p>Ν̅ΘΩΟΥ ΔΕ ΑΥΦΑΙ ΉΔ ΝΙΒΑCΑΝΟC ΖΙΤΕΝ †ΧΟΜ ΕΤCΟCΙ Ν̅ΤΕ Ι̅Η̅C Π̅Χ̅C</p>	<p><i>But they bore the <i>tortures</i> through the sublime might of Jesus Christ</i></p>
<p>ΑΦΟΥΟΝΖΦ ΕΡΩΟΥ ΑΦ†ΖΙΡΗΝΗ ΝΩΟΥ ΑΦ†ΝΟΜ† ΝΩΟΥ ΩΑΤΟΥCΙ Μ̅ΠΙΧΛΟΜ</p>	<p><i>He appeared to them, He gave them <i>peace</i> and comforted them till they received the crown</i></p>
<p>ΑΥΩΜC ΩΑ ΝΟΥΜΟΥ† ΉΕΝ †ΛΥΜΗΝΗ Μ̅ΜΩΟΥ ΑΦΟΥΩΜ Μ̅ΠΟΥCΩΜΑ Ν̅ΧΕ ΠΙΧΑΦ ΝΕΜ ΠΩΧΕΒ</p>	<p><i>They sunk till their neck in the lake of water and the frost and cold ate thier <i>bodies</i></i></p>
<p>ΝΑΧΑΜΟΝΙ Ν̅ΤΟΤΟΥ Ν̅ΧΕ ΝΙΑΓΙΟC ΕΥΕΡΨΑΛΙΝ ΕΠ̅C̅C ΉΕΝ ΟΥΜΟΥΝ ΕΒΟΛ</p>	<p><i>The <i>saints</i> restrained themselves, <i>singing</i> to the Lord in perseverance</i></p>
<p>ΜΕΝΕΝCΑ ΝΑΙ ΑΥΧΩΚ Μ̅ΠΟΥΑΓΩΝ ΕΒΟΛ ΑΥΜΟΥ ΕΧΕΝ Π̅Χ̅C ΕΤΑΦΜΟΥ ΕΧΩΝ</p>	<p><i>After this they accomplished their <i>struggle</i> they died for Christ (<i>sake</i>) who died for our sake</i></p>
<p>ΑΥΕΡΦΟΡΙΝ Μ̅ΠΙΧΛΟΜ Μ̅ΜΑΡΤΥΡΙΚΟΝ Ν̅ΖΡΗΙ ΉΕΝ CΟΥ Ι̅Γ̅ Μ̅ΠΑΒΟΤ ΦΑΜΕΝΩΘ</p>	<p><i>They wore the crown of <i>martyrdom</i> on the day of 13th of the month of Baramhât</i></p>
<p>ΖΙΤΕΝ ΝΙΕΥΧΗ</p>	<p><i>Through the <i>prayers</i> . . .</i></p>

ΙΤΑ ΨΑΛΙ ΒΑΤΟΣ<sup>31</sup>

*And Psali Batos*

ΞΑΝΧΛΟΜ ΝΑΤΩΣΑΧΙ ΝΗΜΩΟΥ ΑΓΓΗΤΟΥ  
 ΝΧΕ ΠΧΣ ΕΧΕΝ ΠΜ̄ ΝΗΑΡΤΥΡΟΣ ΝΤΕ  
 †ΠΟΛΙΣ ΣΕΒΑΣΤΗ

Crowns beyond words *Christ* gave to the  
 forty *martyrs* of the *city* of *Sebaste*

ΟΥΟΣ ΑΥΟΥΝΟΥ ΝΕΜ ΠΧΣ ΞΕΝ ΘΜΕΤΟΥΡΟ  
 ΝΤΕ ΝΙΦΗΟῩΙ ΝΕΜ ΝΗΜΑΝΕΜΤΟΝ ΕΘΥ ΞΕΝ  
 ΔΛΗΜ̄ ΝΤΕ ΤΦΕ

And they rejoiced with *Christ* in the  
 heavenly kingdom and the holy places of  
 rest in the heavenly *Jerusalem*

ΑΥΕΡΩΡΠ̄ ΝΡΩΤΕΒ ΕΒΟΛΞΕΝ ΠΔΙΠΝΟΝ  
 ΝΕΠΟΡΑΝΙΟΝ ΠΙΩΟ ΝΡΟΜΠ̄ ΕΤΕ ΠΧΣ  
 ΑΡΙΣΤΩΝ ΝΕΜ ΝΙΣΩΤΠ̄ ΝΤΑϞ

They went ahead to recline at the  
*heavenly banquet* of the thousand years  
 which *Christ* eats with His chosen

ΟΥΟΣ ΑΥΕΡΩΔΙ ΝΠΠ̄ΝΑΤΙΚΟΝ ΝΕΜ  
 ΠΕΝΣΩΤΗΡ̄ ΙΗΣ̄ ΠΧΣ ΝΤΩΒΕΙΩ ΝΝΗΪΣΙ  
 ΕΤΑΥΟΠΟΥ ΖΙΧΕΝ ΠΕΦΡΑΝ

And they *spiritually* rejoiced with our  
*Saviour Jesus Christ* in reward for the  
 pains that they had suffered<sup>32</sup> in His name

ΟΥΩΝΙΑΤΕΝΘΗΝΟΥ ΞΕΝ ΟΥΜΕΘΜΗ ΞΑ  
 ΝΙΓΕΝΝΕΟΣ ΝΤΕ ΠΧΣ ΧΕ ΑΡΕΤΕΝΕΡΜΠΩΔ  
 ΕΣΙ ΝΠΙΧΛΟΜ̄ ΝΑΤΛΩΜ

Blessed are you truly, *noble* ones of *Christ*  
 for you became worthy to receive the  
 imperishable crown

ΑΡΙΠΡΕΣΒΥΙΝ ΕΖΡΗΙ ΕΧΩΝ ΝΑΖΡΕΝ ΠΕΝΘ̄  
 ΙΗΣ̄ ΠΧΣ ΕΤΕ ΕΜΜΑΝΟΥΗΛ ΠΕΝΝΟΥ†  
 ΠΗΑΙΡΩΜΗ ΝΑΓΑΘΟΣ

*Intercede* on our behalf in front of our  
 Lord *Jesus Christ* who is *Emmanuel* our  
 God, the *good* lover of humankind

ΖΙΝΑ ΝΤΕΦΕΡΟΥΝΑΙ ΝΕΜΑΝ ΟΥΟΣ  
 ΝΤΕΦΝΟΖΕΜ̄ ΝΜΟΝ ΕΒΟΛΖΑ ΝΙΚΥΝΔΙΝΟΣ  
 ΝΤΕ ΠΔΙΑΒΟΛΟΣ ΕΤΖΩΟΥ

*In order that* He have mercy upon us and  
 save us from the *dangers* of the evil *devil*

ΝΤΕΦΤΑΧΡΟΝ ΤΗΡΕΝ ΕΥΣΟΠ̄ ΕΧΕΝ ΠΗΑΖ†  
 ΕΤΣΟΥΤΩΝ ΝΤΕ †ΘΡΙΑΣ ΕΘΥ ΩΔ ΠΗΙϞΙ  
 ΝΪΔΕ

That He establish us all together in the  
 straight faith of the Holy *Trinity* till the  
 last breath

<sup>31</sup> O'Leary, *The Difnar* 2.72–73.

<sup>32</sup> Lit “received”.

ἵτεϕεμμι ναν ἵτεϕιρηνη νεν  
τεϕεκκλησια Ἐϑῶ ἵτεϕταχρο ἵνεσεντ  
εχεν τπετρα ἵατκιμ

To establish for us His *peace* with His  
holy *Church* and confirm its foundations  
upon the unshakable *rock*

τεϕϕομῆεν ἵνεμχαχι τηροϕ σαπεснт  
ἵνεσалаλχ ἵτεϕιρι ἵογναι νεμαν  
τηροϕ κατα πεϕνιωτ ἵηαι

To crush all our enemies under our feet  
and to have pity upon us all *according to*  
His great mercy

αϕμτον ἵμοϕ ῃεν παιεροϕ ἵχε  
πενωτ διονησιϕ πινωτ ἵπατριαρχηс  
ἵτε τπολιс αλεξανδρια

On this day, our father, the great  
*patriarch* Dionysios of the *city of*  
Alexandria went to rest

αϕορι ριχεν πιϑρονϕ ἵαποστολικϕ  
Ἐϑῶ ἵπχωκ ἵζ ἵρομπι ογορ αϕϕεναϕ  
ϕα νιμανεντον

He remained on the holy *Apostolic seat*  
for seven complete years and he  
departed to the places of rest

τωβρ ἵπϕτ ερρη εχων πιῃ ἵμαρτϕροс  
νεν διονησιϕ πιπατριαρχηс ἵτεϕχα  
νενнови ναν εβολ

Pray to the Lord on our behalf, forty  
*martyrs* and Dionsysios the *patriarch*, in  
order that He forgives our sins

### The book of glorifications<sup>33</sup>

πιρλοχ ἵτε τεκκλησια πιρλοχ πε  
ϕλαϕ ετϑωοϕτ εροс πιρλοχ πε  
πλγμνη ἵηαιϕ πιῃ Ἐϑῶ ἵτε сεπαсте

Sweet (is) the *church*, sweet are the  
*people* assembled in it. Sweet is the  
*icon*<sup>34</sup> of these *martyrs*, the holy forty of  
Sebaste

παρалеξ Paralexis

33 Attallah Arsenius al-Muharraqi, πχωη ἵτε νιχιντϕοϕ ἵτπαρϑενϕс νιαγγελοс νιαποστολοс νιϕ νεν νηϑοϕαβ [*The Book of the Holy Glorifications of the Virgin, the Angels, the Apostles, the Martyrs and the Saints*] (Cairo, 1972), 284–87. Regarding this book see Youhanna Nessim Youssef, “Une relecture des glorifications coptes,” *BSAC* 34 (1995): 77–83; and idem, “Un témoin méconnu de la littérature copte,” *BSAC* 32 (1993): 139–47.

34 For this meaning see G. Godron, “‘ΛΙΜΝΗ’ ‘Portrait’, ‘Image,’” *BSAC* 25 (1983): 1–50; and Youhanna Nessim Youssef, “La terminologie de l’icône selon les livres liturgiques coptes,” *Göttinger Miszellen* 158 (1997): 101–105.

πεχνη ναϋ ρε ακρωκ<sup>35</sup> εϋων ερε ναι  
 ⲙ̅ ⲛ̅ϫⲓⲙ̅ ⲛ̅ⲧⲟⲧⲕ ⲛ̅ϫⲁϣ ρε ϣⲁ ⲛⲓ ⲙ̅ ⲉϋϣ̅  
 ⲛ̅ⲧε σεπαϣτε ⲛ̅ⲧⲁⲧⲏⲧⲟϥ εϣεν ⲧⲟϥⲁⲫε

I said to him: "Where do you go with  
 forty crowns in your hand." He said:  
 "to the holy forty of Sebaste in order to  
 put them over their heads

ⲛ̅ⲧεϣεβⲓⲱ ⲛ̅ⲧⲟϥⲛ̅ ⲛ̅ⲉⲙ ⲛ̅ⲃⲓϣⲓ  
 ⲉⲧⲁϣⲟⲡⲟϥ εϣρⲏ εϣεν ϣρⲁⲛ ⲛ̅ⲡⲟϥ  
 ⲛ̅ϣρⲏ ⲃεν ⲙ̅ⲉⲧⲟϥρⲟ ⲛ̅ⲏⲓⲫⲏⲟϣ̅

In reward to their *martyrdom* and the  
 pain that they received for the name of  
 the Lord in the heavenly kingdom"

χερε ⲛⲱⲧεν ⲱ ⲛⲓⲑενⲛⲉⲟϥ ⲛⲓⲙ̅ ⲉϋϣ̅  
 ⲛ̅ⲛ̅ⲏⲉⲧⲁϣⲟⲡⲓ ⲛ̅ⲏⲏⲓⲃⲁϣⲁⲛⲟϥ ⲉϋⲃε  
 ϣρⲁⲛ ⲛ̅ ⲓⲏϥ ⲛ̅ϫϥ

*Hail to you, O noble ones, the holy forty  
 martyrs who received the tortures for the  
 name of Jesus Christ*

χερε ⲛⲱⲧεν ⲱ ⲛⲓⲛ̅ⲓ ⲛⲓⲙ̅ ⲉϋϣ̅ ⲛ̅ⲑενⲛⲉⲟϥ  
 ⲛ̅ⲏⲉⲧⲁϣερϣⲟρⲓⲛ ⲛ̅ⲏⲓⲡⲓϫⲓⲙ̅ ⲛ̅ⲁⲧⲓⲱⲙ̅  
 εⲃⲟⲗⲃεν ⲧⲫε

*Hail to you, O martyrs, the holy forty  
 noble ones who wore the imperishable  
 crown from Heaven*

χερε ⲛⲱⲧεν ⲛⲓⲁⲗⲟⲫⲟρⲟϥ ⲛⲓⲙ̅ ⲉϋϣ̅ ⲛ̅ⲧε  
 σεπαϣτε ⲛ̅ⲏⲉⲧⲁϣⲟⲡⲓ ⲛ̅ⲏⲡⲟϥϣⲛⲟϥ ⲉϋⲃε  
 ϣρⲁⲛ ⲛ̅ⲧε ⲓⲏϥ ⲛ̅ϫϥ

*Hail to you, O victorious ones, the holy  
 forty of Sebaste who shed their blood for  
 the name of Jesus Christ*

ⲧⲱⲃεϣ̅ ⲛⲓⲁⲗⲟⲫⲟρⲟϥ

Pray, O *victorious ones* . . .

### Doxology Adam<sup>36</sup>

χερε ⲛⲓⲛ̅ⲓ ⲛⲓⲙ̅ ⲛ̅ⲑενⲛⲉⲟϥ ⲛ̅ⲏⲉⲧϫⲱⲗϣ̅  
 ⲛ̅ⲏⲡⲟϥⲱⲓⲛⲓ ⲛ̅ⲧⲓⲧρⲓⲁϣ̅ ⲛ̅ⲏρⲉϣⲧⲁⲙ̅ⲃⲟ

*Hail to the holy forty noble martyrs who  
 are covered by the light of the Life-giving  
 Trinity*

35 Read ακρωκ.

36 The doxology is a hymn used in the Coptic Church to commemorate an event or a church personality. It is usually a short hymn of 5 to 10 stanzas. There are two types of doxologies. The first is the doxology to the Batos tune, sung during vespers, matins and psalmodia. The second is the doxology to the Adam tune sung especially during the rite of glorification. The doxologies provide a valuable background to Coptic literature, giving a brief summary of the martyrdom, miracles, etc. of many saints.

хере нигеннеос п̄м̄ е̄θ̄γ̄ ḡτε сепасте  
 н̄мартγρος е̄θ̄γ̄ н̄менра† ḡте п̄х̄с̄

*Hail to the noble ones, the holy forty of  
 Sebaste, the holy martyrs, beloved of  
 Christ*

хере н̄аολητης εχεν п̄м̄αε†  
 ετσογτων β̄εν φραν ḡ†τριαс̄ е̄θ̄γ̄  
 п̄м̄ е̄θ̄γ̄ ḡ††

*Hail to the athletes for the straight faith in  
 the name of the Holy Trinity, the holy forty  
 martyrs*

хере н̄аολοφορος п̄м̄ е̄θ̄γ̄ ḡгеннеос  
 н̄нетаγφων ḡπογснос̄ ε̄οβε φραν  
 ḡп̄х̄с̄

*Hail to the victorious ones, the holy noble  
 forty who shed their blood for the name  
 of Christ*

γ̄ιτεν н̄εγχη ḡте н̄аολοφορος  
 ḡмартγρος п̄м̄ е̄θ̄γ̄ ḡте сепасте  
 п̄с̄с̄ аρι

Through the *prayers* of the *victorious  
 martyrs*, the holy forty of Sebaste, Lord  
 grant . . .

The note mentioned in the book of the *ordo* of the church not to use the tunes of Lent should the feast of the forty martyrs fall during that liturgical period dates back to *Homily* 18 of Severus of Antioch (delivered on Saturday, 9 March 513), where he highlighted:

No one should be surprised, if I take you to the shrine of the martyrs . . . as it is mentioned in the ancient canons that during the forty days of Lent, we should not make the reunions for the victory of the martyrs. But if we did, it is not against the laws, as it is permitted during the Saturdays and Sundays.<sup>37</sup>

## 5 Conciliar Links between Antioch and the Coptic Tradition

Severus in turn refers to canon 51 of the Synod of Laodicea (ca. 363–81), which in the Greek tradition asserts: “During Lent, no commemoration for

37 M. Brière and F. Graffin, *Les homiliae Cathedrales de Sévère d'Antioche*, PO 37/1 (Turnhout: Brepols, 1975), 6–9, n.171.

the martyrs but only commemorate them during Saturdays<sup>38</sup> and Sundays.”<sup>39</sup> This canon became elaborated in one strand of tradition in Egypt, where in the Copto-Arabic collections of the canons we find the following version. In the canonical collection of the monk Macarius,<sup>40</sup> from the monastery of St John the Dwarf (Paris Arabe 238) we read:

The council of Laodicea Paris fol. 162 (for the same text, see Paris Arabe 251, fol. 170r dated AD 1353)<sup>41</sup>

الحادي والخمسون من اجل انه لا يجب ان يعيد بشي من الاعياد ولا ذاكين الشهيد في الصوم الكبير ما خلا في اليومين الشريفين الذين اختارهما الابا المتقدمون وهما عيد الاربعين شهيد وعيد البشارة واما عدا غيرهما ففي السبت لا غيرها

Canon 51: For during Lent, no feasts or commemoration for the martyrs *but only the two honoured days which the fathers that preceded [allowed] namely the feast of the forty martyrs and the feast of the annunciation,* except they (the commemorations) should be only during the Saturdays.<sup>42</sup>

By contrast in the same manuscript on fol. 229v, Synod of Antioch–Laodicea, canon 75 (dated to the fourteenth century), the canon is preserved unadorned.<sup>43</sup>

انه لا يجب في الاربعين ان يعيدوا اعياد الشهيد ابل يكون تذكار الشهيد ابل يكون تذكار  
الشهدا في السبت والا حد لا غير

38 Saturdays and Sundays had special importance in the early church as in the Coptic Church to the present day. See Willy Rordorf, *Le Sabbat et le Dimanche d'après les pères de l'Église*, Traditio Christiana, vol. 2 (Neuchâtel: Delachaux et Niestlé, 1972); J. Muysier, “Le samedi et le dimanche dans l'Église et la littérature copte,” in *Le martyre d'Apa Épima*, ed. T. Mina, (Cairo: Service des Antiquités de l'Égypte, 1937), 89–111.

39 Alpi, *La route royale*, 1.137.

40 R.-G. Coquin, “Macarius the Canonist,” *Coptic Encyclopedia* 5.1490–91.

41 G. Troupeau, *Catalogue des manuscrits arabes- première partie: manuscrits chrétiens*, t. 1, no. 1–323 (Paris: Bibliothèque nationale, 1972), 208–209. This copy is considered the best manuscript by Coquin, “Macarius the Canonist,” 1490b–91a.

42 My italics. The same reading is found in Paris, BnF Arabe 252, fol. 386v, Council of Laodicea, canon 52 (dated 1381AM = AD 1664) and in Paris, BnF Arabe 239, fol. 167. See Troupeau, *Catalogue des Manuscrits*, 210–11.

43 Troupeau, *Catalogue*, 200–201. See also Paris, BnF Arabe 239, fol. 174r; and Paris, BnF Arabe 240, fol. 126v; and Troupeau, *Catalogue*, 201–202.

For during Lent,<sup>44</sup> no feasts for the martyrs but the commemorations should be only during the Saturdays and Sundays.

However, in the *Encyclopedia the Lamp of Darkness* of Ibn Kabar (+ A.D. 1324),<sup>45</sup> chapter 5, we read in canon 78 of the Synod of Laodicea:<sup>46</sup>

من أجل أنه لا يجوز أن يعمل تذكارات الشهداء في الصوم الكبير إلا في يومي الأربعين  
شهيد أو البشارة

For it is not allowed to celebrate the commemoration of the martyrs in the great fast [Lent] except on two days: the forty martyrs and the annunciation.

## 6 Conclusions

In the light of this evidence it is perhaps not surprising that in the Sahidic Antiphonarium there is a special commemoration of the forty martyrs of Sebaste,<sup>47</sup> while in the Bohairic liturgical texts there is an insistence on the ‘the straight faith’ or orthodoxy, a term with special significance for the Coptic (non-Chalcedonian) church. It is possible that these liturgical texts preserve a tradition that goes back to Severus of Antioch himself as in the case of the cults of Saints Leontius, Sergius and Bacchus. Tantalising as this possibility is, the absence of any evidence for the cult prior to the seventh century, however, makes it impossible to draw this conclusion with certainty. If we consider the alternative, that the cult of the forty martyrs was adopted in Egypt in the first centuries of Islamic rule, we observe a very particular shaping of Egyptian Christian identity that conforms to the process that Arietta Papaconstantinou

44 Literally “the forty (days)”.

45 For this author see Samir Khalil, “L’encyclopédie Liturgique d’Ibn Kabar (+ 1324) et son apologie d’usage Coptes,” in *Crossword of Cultures Studies in Liturgy and Patristics in Honor of Gabriele Winkler*, ed. H.-J. Feulner, E. Velkouska, and R. Taft, OCA, vol. 260 (Rome: Pontificio Istituto Orientale, 2000), 629–55; idem, “Un manuscrit arabe d’Alepp reconnu, le Sbath 11253,” *Le Muséon* 91 (1978): 179–88; and A. Wadi, “Abu al-Barakat Ibn Kabar, Misbah al-Zulmah (cap. 18: il digiuno e la settimana santa,” *SOCC* 34 (2001): 233–322.

46 Samir Khalil, *Misbah al-Zulmah/ fi Idah al-Hidmah, مصباح الظلمة في إيضاح الخدمة* [*The Lamp of Darkness for the Explanation of the Service*] (Cairo: Al-Karûz Bookshop, 1971), 167.

47 M. Cramer and M. Krause, *Das Koptische Antiphonar (M 575 und P. 11967)*, Jerusalem Theologisches Forum, vol. 12 (Munster: Aschendorff Verlag, 2008), 254–57.

has outlined. With its appeal to Severus of Antioch and to his reading of canon 51 of the Synod of Laodicea, as well as to Basil of Caesarea and Gregory of Nazianzus as lights of the church, the cult of the forty martyrs, like the 'Legend of Antioch', shapes for the Coptic Church a line of descent that is both orthodox and that goes back to the 'Era of the Martyrs', the very foundations of the Christian church.

There may, however, be another element at work here. Glenn Peers in his analysis of the oratory of the forty martyrs at Syracuse points out that in that instance the forty martyrs themselves may well have operated within the Christian community as a symbol of resistance during Muslim rule.<sup>48</sup> Just as Papaconstantinou outlines the creation of an Egyptian 'Era of the Martyrs' as in itself part of the Coptic Christian identity-formation that occurred in Egypt under the first two centuries of Muslim rule,<sup>49</sup> Peers points out the difficulty faced by a Christian community in Sicily where accommodation and appropriation, such as mixed Christian-Muslim marriages, were the norm. In this climate the forty martyrs spoke to the cohesion of the church, the call to unity in the face of adversity (even though in reality little existed), and could even be read as a community of monks "harnessed to a common salvation-making rope."<sup>50</sup> Their message was strongly triumphalist, as we see in the liturgical texts cited above. In this respect in Egypt the adoption of this particular cult in these defining centuries, with its soldier-saints, may initially have operated at a level beyond the firming of non-Chalcedonian identity.

## Bibliography

Severus of Antioch. *Homiliae* ([*Hom.* 1–17, 18–25, 26–31, 40–45, and 46–51]: Maurice Brière and René Graffin, eds and trans., *Les "Homilies Cathedrales" de Sévère d'Antioch*, PO, vols 38/2, 37/1, 36/4, 36/1, and 35/3. Turnhout: Brepols, 1977, 1975, 1974, 1971, and 1969; [*Hom.* 32–39]: Maurice Brière, René Graffin, and Christopher Lash, eds and trans., *Les "Homilies Cathedrales" de Sévère d'Antioch*, PO, vol. 36/3. Turnhout: Brepols 1972; [*Hom.* 52–57]: Rubens Duval, ed. and trans., *Les "Homilies Cathedrales" de Sévère d'Antioch*, PO, vol. 4/1. Turnhout: Brepols, 1906); [*Hom.* 58–69,

48 Glenn Peers, "Finding Faith Underground: Visions of the Forty Martyrs Oratory at Syracuse," in *Looking Beyond: Visions, Dreams and Insights in Medieval Art and History*, ed. Colum Hourihane (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2010), 84–106.

49 Papaconstantinou, "Coptic 'Church of the Martyrs,'" 84–86.

50 Peers, "Finding Faith Underground," 103–104. The latter has relevance in light of the presence of the chapel of the forty martyrs in the Monastery of the Syrians at Wadi-Natrun.



- 70–76, 78–83, 84–90, 91–98, 104–12, 113–19, and 120–25]: Maurice Brière, ed. and trans., *Les "Homilies Cathedrales" de Sévère d'Antioch*, PO, vols 8/2, 12/1, 20/2, 23/1, 25/1, 25/4, 26/3, and 29/1. Turnhout: Brepols, 1911 [2nd ed., 1971], 1915, 1927 [2nd ed. 1974], 1932 [2nd ed. 1974], 1935, 1943 [2nd ed. 1974], 1947, and 1960; [*Hom.* 77]: Marc-Antoine Kugener and Edgar Triffaux, eds and trans., *Les "Homilies Cathedrales" de Sévère d'Antioch*, PO, vol. 16/5. Turnhout: Brepols, 1922; [*Hom.* 99–103]: Ignazio Guidi, ed. and trans., *Les "Homilies Cathedrales" de Sévère d'Antioch*, PO, vol. 22/2. Turnhout: Brepols, 1930).
- Severus of Antioch. *Hymns* (Ernest W. Brooks, *James of Edessa: The Hymns of Severus*, PO, vol. 9. Turnhout: Brepols, 1911).
- Allen, Pauline, and C.T.R. Hayward. *Severus of Antioch*, The Early Church Fathers. London and New York: Routledge, 2004.
- Alpi, Frédéric N. *La route royale: Sévère d'Antioche et les Églises d'Orient (512–518)*, 2 vols. ВАН, vol. 188. Beyrouth: Presses de l'Ifpo, 2009.
- Buckle, David Purdy. "The Forty Martyrs of Sebaste, A Study of Hagiographical Development." *BJRL* 6 (1921–1922): 352–60.
- Budge, E.A. Wallis, ed. and trans. *Coptic Martyrdoms in the Dialect of Upper Egypt*. London: British Museum, 1914.
- Burmester, O.H.E. "Tûrûhat of the Coptic Church." *OCP* 3 (1937): 78–109 and 505–49.  
———. "The Turûhât of the Saints II (Kyahk-An-Nasi)." *BSAC* 5 (1939): 84–157.
- Capuani, Massimo, et al. *Christian Egypt: Coptic Art and Monuments through Two Millennia*. Cairo: American University in Cairo Press, 2002.
- Coquin, R.-G. "Macarius the Canonist." In *Coptic Encyclopedia*, ed. A.S. Atiya, vol. 5, 1490–91. New York: Macmillan, 1991.
- Cramer, M., and M. Krause. *Das Koptische Antiphonar (M 575 und P. 11967)*, Jerusalem Theologisches Forum, vol. 12. Münster: Aschendorff Verlag, 2008.
- Fiey, Jean-Maurice. "Coptes et syriaques, contacts et échanges." *SOC* 15 (1972–1973): 295–366.
- Gabra, Gawdat. "Untersuchungen zum Difnar der koptischen Kirche. I Quellenlage, Forschungsgeschichte und künftige Aufgaben." *BSAC* 35 (1996): 37–52.  
———. "Untersuchungen zum Difnar der koptischen Kirche. II Zur Kompilation." *BSAC* 37 (1998): 49–68.  
———. *Coptic Monasteries: Egypt's Monastic Art and Architecture*. Cairo and New York: American University in Cairo Press, 2002.
- Godron, G. "'ΛΙΜΗΝ' 'Portrait' 'Image.'" *BSAC* 25 (1983): 1–50.
- Graf, G. "Zwei dogmatische Florilegien der Kopten." *OCP* 3 (1937): 345–402.
- Grossmann, Peter. "Dayr al-Suryan." In *Coptic Encyclopedia*, ed. A.S. Atiya, vol. 3, 876–81. New York: MacMillan, 1991.
- den Heijer, Johannes. "Relations between Copts and Syrians in the Light of Recent Discoveries at Dayras-Suryân." In *Coptic Studies on the Threshold of a New Millennium* 11.

- Proceedings of the Seventh International Congress of Coptic Studies, Leiden 2000*, edited by M. Immerzeel and J. Van der Vliet, OLA, vol. 133, 923–38. Leuven: Peters, 2004.
- Karlynn-Hayter, Patricia. "Passio of the XL Martyrs of Sebasteia, The Greek Tradition: The Earliest Account." *AB* 109 (1991): 249–304.
- Khalil, Samir. "L'encyclopédie Liturgique d'Ibn Kabar (+ 1324) et son apologie d'usage Coptes." In *Crossword of Cultures Studies in Liturgy and Patristics in Honor of Gabriele Winkler*, edited by H.-J. Feulner, E. Velkouska, and R. Taft, OCA, vol. 260, 629–55. Rome: Pontificio Istituto Orientale, 2000.
- . "Un manuscrit arabe d'Alep reconnu, le Sbath 11253." *Le Muséon* 91 (1978): 179–88.
- Kropp, Angelicus M. *Ausgewählte koptische Zaubertexten*, 3 vols. Brussels: Edition de la Fondation égyptologique reine Élizabeth, 1930–1931.
- Leemans, Johan, Wendy Mayer, Pauline Allen, and Boudewijn Dehandschutter. *Let us die that we may live': Greek Homilies on Christian Martyrs from Asia Minor, Palestine, and Syria (c. AD 350–AD 450)*. London and New York: Routledge, 2003.
- Lucchesi, Enzo. "Les Quarante Martyrs de Sébaste. Un témoin copte inédit." In *Aegyptus Christiana. Mélanges d'hagiographie égyptienne et orientale dédiés à la mémoire du P. Paul Devos Bollandiste*, edited by Ugo Zanetti and Enzo Lucchesi, 111–18. Geneva: Patrick Cramer, 2004.
- . "L'encomion copte des XL Martyrs de Sébaste: un nouveau folio repéré à la Pierpoint Morgan Library." *AB* 126 (2008): 178.
- Maraval, Pierre. "Les premiers développements du culte des XL martyrs de Sébastée dans l'orient byzantin et en occident." *VetChr* 36 (1999): 193–211.
- al-Masu'udi, 'Abd al-Masih. *تحفة السائلين في ذكر أديرة رهبان المصريين* [*the Gem of those who ask in the Mentioning of the Monasteries of the Egyptian monks*]. 2nd ed. Cairo: The Monastery of Baramûs, 1999.
- Mayer, Wendy, and Pauline Allen. *The Churches of Syrian Antioch (300–638 CE)*, Late Antique History and Religion, vol. 5. Leuven: Peeters, 2012.
- Meinardus, Otto F.A. *Christian Egypt, Faith and Life*. Cairo: American University in Cairo Press, 1970.
- Mühlenberg, Ekkehard. "Gregor von Nyssa über die Vierzig und den ersten Märtyrer (Stephanus)." In *Christian Martyrdom in Late Antiquity (300–450 AD): History and Discourse, Tradition and Religious Identity*, edited by Peter Gemeinhardt and Johan Leemans, AKG, Bd 116, 115–33. Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2012.
- Muysier, J. "Le samedi et le dimanche dans l'Église et la littérature copte." In *Le martyre d'Apa Épîma*, edited by T. Mina, 89–111. Cairo: Service des Antiquités de l'Égypte, 1937.
- O'Leary, De Lacy, *The Difnar (Antiphonarium) of the Coptic Church*, vol. 2. London: Luzac, 1927.

- Orlandi, Tito. "Cycle." In *Coptic Encyclopedia*, edited by A.S. Atiya, vol. 3, 666–68. New York: Macmillan, 1991.
- . "Hagiography, Coptic." In *Coptic Encyclopedia*, edited by A.S. Atiya, vol. 4, 1191–97. New York: Macmillan, 1991.
- Papaconstantinou, Arietta. *Le culte des saints en Égypte des Byzantins aux Abassides. L'apport des inscriptions et des papyrus grecs et coptes*, Collection Le monde byzantin dirigée par Bernard Flusin. Paris: CNRS, 2001.
- . "Historiography, Hagiography, and the Making of the Coptic 'Church of the Martyrs' in Early Islamic Egypt." *DOP* 60 (2006): 65–86.
- Peers, Glenn. "Finding Faith Underground: Visions of the Forty Martyrs Oratory at Syracuse." In *Looking Beyond: Visions, Dreams and Insights in Medieval Art and History*, edited by Colum Hourihane, 84–106. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2010.
- Rordorf, Willy. *Le Sabbat et le Dimanche d'après les pères de l'Église*, Traditio Christiana, vol. 2. Neuchâtel, Delachaux et Niestlé, 1972.
- Simaika, M., and Yassa 'Abd al-Masih. *Catalogue of the Coptic and Arabic Manuscripts in the Coptic Museum, the Patriarchate, the Principal Churches of Cairo and Alexandria and the Monasteries of Egypt*, vol. 2, fasc. 1. Cairo: Government Press, 1942.
- Simon, Jean. "Le culte des XL Martyrs dans l'Égypte chrétienne." *Orientalia* 3 (1934): 174–76.
- Tawadrus al-Surianî, Samuel. *الأديرة المصرية العامرة (The Inhabited Egyptian Monasteries)*. Cairo, 1968.
- Troupeau, G. *Catalogue des manuscrits arabes—première partie, manuscrits Chrétiens*, t. 1, no. 1–323. Paris: Bibliothèque nationale, 1972.
- Wadi, A. "Abu al-Barakat Ibn Kabar, Misbah al-Zulmah (cap. 18: il digiuno e la settimanta santa)." *SOCC* 34 (2001): 233–322.
- White, Hugh G. Evelyn. *The monasteries of the Wâdi 'N Natrûn*, part 2: *The History of the Monasteries of Nitria and of Scetis*, The Metropolitan Museum of Art Egypt Expedition. New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1932.
- Winstedt, Eric O. *Coptic Texts on Saint Theodore the General, Saint Theodore the Eastern, Chamoul and Justus*. London and Oxford: Williams and Norgate, 1910.
- Youssef, Youhanna Nessim. "Un témoin méconnu de la littérature copte." *BSAC* 32 (1993): 139–47.
- . "Une relecture des glorifications coptes." *BSAC* 34 (1995): 77–83.
- . "La terminologie de l'icône selon les livres liturgiques coptes." *Göttinger Miszellen* 158 (1997): 101–105.
- . "The Quotations of Severus of Antioch in the Book of the Confessions of the Fathers." *ANES* 40 (2003): 178–229.
- . "The Monastery of Qalamun during the Fourteenth and Fifteenth centuries." In *Christianity and Monasticism in the Fayoum Oasis, Essays from the 2004 International*

*Symposium of the Saint Mark Foundation and the Saint Shenouda the Archmandrite Coptic Society in Honor of Martin Krause*, edited by Gawdat Gabra, 91–102. Cairo and New York: American University in Cairo Press, 2005.

———. “The Role of Severus of Antioch in the Dialogue between Greek, Coptic and Syriac Cultures.” *POr* 31 (2006): 163–84.

## The Treatment of Ecumenical Councils in Byzantine Chronicles

*Roger Scott*

The western branches of the orthodox church acknowledge seven councils or synods as being ecumenical and recognise each of them by their location and also by their ordinal numeral and by the number of bishops attending. So Nicaea I (325) is referred to as the First ecumenical council of 318 bishops; Constantinople I (381) as the Second of 150 bishops; Ephesus I (431) the Third of 240 bishops; Chalcedon (451) the Fourth of 630 bishops; Constantinople II (553) the Fifth of 265 bishops; Constantinople III (7 November 680–16 September 681) the Sixth of 289 bishops; and Nicaea II (787) as the Seventh and final ecumenical council of 350 bishops. There is also at least partial acceptance of the council *in Trullo* as ecumenical (sometime between the end of 691 and 1 September 692), named from its location in the Constantinopolitan palace of that name but otherwise known as the *Quinisextum* or *Penthekte*, which considered itself to be ecumenical from being convened by Justinian II to complete the work of the Fifth and Sixth councils, while Ephesus II (8–22 August 449) was also convened as ecumenical but was almost immediately rejected as such, being known rather as the Robber council (*Latrocinium*), the term invented for it by Pope Leo I. It is these seven that define correct belief and proper governance of the church, so their decisions, together with those of the *Latrocinium* and *in Trullo*, were highly influential in ecclesiastical matters which in turn made them significant also in Byzantine secular history.

Although the councils are overlooked in classicising histories such as Procopius and Agathias as unsuitable material for that genre with its emphasis on secular history and avoidance of Christian terminology, we have, in addition to good documentary records for most of the councils, solid accounts of the first five in near-contemporary ecclesiastical histories: Eusebius for Nicaea I; the mid-fifth-century church historians Socrates, Sozomen, and Theodoret for Constantinople I and Ephesus I; and the late sixth-century Evagrius for the *Latrocinium*, Chalcedon, and Constantinople II. There are, however, no further ecclesiastical historians after Evagrius until Nikephoros Kallistos Xanthopoulos in the fourteenth century, so no ecclesiastical historian records the Sixth, Seventh, or the *in Trullo* councils. Simply the disappearance of that genre for

such a long period is also enough to suggest that the Byzantine reading and listening public, small though it was, not only could not turn to that genre for any account of the Sixth and Seventh councils but is also unlikely to have turned to it for whatever knowledge it may have had about the earlier councils either. With a gap too of secular classicising history between Theophylact Simocatta in the early seventh century and Psellos in the eleventh, any knowledge of the past, both secular and ecclesiastic, was necessarily gained mainly, if not entirely, from Byzantine universal chronicles. This genre, though it too had its own interruptions, overcame them to a great degree by later chroniclers copying almost verbatim much of a predecessor's work, with each chronicle narrating events from creation up to the author's own lifetime.

The Byzantine universal chronicles each record all the councils that had occurred up to the author's lifetime, with the only exceptions being the sixth-century Malalas, who records the first four councils but omits the Fifth; and the twelfth-century Manasses, who omits the lot in a verse chronicle with an emphasis on good stories that also ignores almost everything else to do with ecclesiastical events, perhaps regarding them as unsuitable for his patron, the *sebastocratorissa* Eirene. So the chronicles did at least provide a record of the ecumenical councils, and it is probably the record by which most Byzantines knew whatever they did know about them, whether directly or indirectly. Despite this, two points need noting: first, that the chronicles tell us nothing that we do not know better from other sources (with the single exception of George the Monk's record of the Fifth council); and second, each of the chronicles makes different use of the councils for its narrative of the past. It is, however, the differences in their presentation that may reveal either the changing significance of the ecumenical councils in Byzantine history and society or the literary development of the genre.

The literary treatment of Byzantine chronicles remains in its infancy. The aim of this chapter is to examine how the various universal chronicles treat the ecumenical councils. Although this does not reveal anything about the ecclesiastical decisions themselves, it helps to draw attention to changing attitudes to the past and the use that was made of that past. We shall look at nine chronicles: Malalas (sixth century), *Chronicon Paschale* (seventh century), Theophanes (early ninth century), George the Monk (late ninth century), Symeon Logothete (mid-tenth century), pseudo-Symeon (late tenth century), Psellos' *Historia syntomos* (eleventh century), Kedrenos (eleventh to twelfth centuries), and Zonaras (twelfth century). We necessarily ignore the many local councils such as those discussed in *Synodicon uetus*, probably to be dated between 867 and 920, which claims to record some 166 councils, though some of the 166 are certainly the author's own invention.

## 1 John Malalas

John Malalas is the author of the earliest surviving Byzantine universal chronicle, outlining (to say 'covering' would be an exaggeration) the period from creation to the death of Justinian I in 565, though our one surviving manuscript breaks off in 563. It was unquestionably outlining history from a Christian perspective, being written in 18 books with a clear division between our BC and AD at the chronicle's halfway point marked by the annunciation occurring in the final sentence of book 9 and the incarnation in the opening sentence of book 10. The book very clearly chronicles the victory of Christianity over paganism. So one might well expect a reasonably detailed account of the first five councils that all occur within the period chronicled. In fact Malalas deals with the first four councils in under half a page *in toto* and omits the Fifth entirely, despite it occurring in his own lifetime. This does call for some discussion and explanation. Admittedly Malalas has often been criticised severely and understandably for his inadequacies, but he is gaining recognition both for his record of contemporary events and as a witness to his contemporaries' understanding of their past.<sup>1</sup> What seems most likely is that for Malalas the important issue was simply the success and victory of Christianity as a united whole. In such a scheme the problems within the church, i.e. the issues dealt with by councils, were relatively insignificant. Indeed throughout the chronicle he appears to have a quite different outlook from those who emphasise ordinary early Christians' remarkable grasp of theological issues at all levels of society. Malalas simply appears not to regard them as significant in a universal history of Christianity's triumph.

It is worth looking at the entirety of what he does say about the various councils, partly to show how his successors differed from him:

1. During his reign the council of 318 bishops took place against Arius concerning the Christian faith. The most pious bishop Eusebius Pamphilou, the chronicler, was present at this council (13.11).
2. During his reign Theodosius held the council of 150 bishops in Constantinople concerning the consubstantiality of the Holy Spirit (13.40).
3. A riot broke out while Nestorios was preaching, and Theodosius was compelled to summon the council of 240 bishops at Ephesos against

---

1 A recent massive twelve-year research grant to Mischa Meier (Tübingen) for studying Malalas is good evidence of the belated recognition of his significance.

- Nestorios, and to depose him from his see. The council was led by Cyril, bishop of Alexandria the Great (14.25).
4. During his reign, (Marcian) summoned the Council of Chalcedon, the council of 630 bishops (14.30).

That is all. There is no mention of the *Latrocinium* nor yet the Fifth. His treatment is almost unimaginably brief, even allowing for the necessity of brevity in a narrative that begins with creation. He provides what had become the traditional numbers for bishops attending each council and then offers just a single issue for each of the first three councils, expressed almost as briefly as possible as a headline plus a single explanatory phrase (“against Arius, concerning the Christian faith;” “concerning consubstantiality of the Holy Spirit;” and “against Nestorios, and to depose him from his see”), with no issue at all mentioned for the all-important Fourth council at Chalcedon.

There is clearly no sign here of Malalas making any use of the obvious sources, Eusebius for the First council or, for the next three councils, either Theodore Lector or Theodore’s sources, the mid-fifth-century ecclesiastical historians, Socrates, Sozomen, and Theodoret. It is hard to imagine that he could not have got access to at least some of these works and most probably all of them had he wanted. So his failure to use them almost certainly also reveals something of his attitude and his understanding of the past. In chronicling God’s plan for humankind and hence Christianity’s victory over paganism, internal Christian affairs (and hence ecclesiastical history) was evidently not of any significance. This is in remarkable contrast to his treatment of the emperor Nero, for instance, who is, surprisingly, shown as at least a partial supporter of Christianity who, “unaware that [Christ] had been crucified . . . asked that he be brought to Rome as a great philosopher and wonderworker;”<sup>2</sup> and later “was likewise angry with Pilate and ordered him to be beheaded, saying ‘Why did he hand the Lord Christ over to the Jews, for he was an innocent man and worked miracles;’”<sup>3</sup> which led to Jews insulting Nero “because he had beheaded Pilate to avenge Christ;”<sup>4</sup> all part of a narrative of Christian activity under Nero to which Malalas devotes several times the amount of space that he allots to the sum total of ecumenical councils.<sup>5</sup> We do not know where Malalas found this nonsense about Nero as a champion of Christ but we can be

---

2 Malalas, *Chron.* 10.30 (J. Thurn, ed., *Ioannis Malalae Chronographia*, CFHB, vol. 35 [Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2000], 189).

3 *Ibid.*, 10.36 (CFHB 35.193).

4 *Ibid.*, 10.38 (CFHB 35.194).

5 Other aspects include the contests between Peter and Simon Magus.



confident that he did not invent it, and clearly he would have judged this to be of greater importance in narrating Christianity's success than describing the internal wranglings at councils.<sup>6</sup>

## 2 (Evagrius)

Between Malalas and the next surviving chronicle is *Historia ecclesiastica* by Evagrius, covering the period from Ephesus I to 593 and written shortly thereafter.<sup>7</sup> It was the last of its genre to be written until Nikephoros Kallistos Xanthopoulos in the fourteenth century who certainly used Evagrius as a source, but it seems that the intervening chroniclers did not have access to his work. Evagrius made use of the *acta* of the Third, Fourth (which also included the *acta* of the *Latrocinium*), and Fifth councils<sup>8</sup> and his comparatively detailed (and remarkably unemotional) treatment would certainly have enriched the chronicle tradition considerably had he been exploited.

## 3 *Chronicon Paschale*

The next universal chronicle to survive is *Chronicon Paschale*, originally extending from Adam to 630 (though our single manuscript breaks off in 628) and written shortly thereafter. It was given its name by its first editor, Charles du Cange, in his posthumous first edition of 1689 because it offered ways of dating Easter. Its author certainly had access to some of Justinian's decrees on ecclesiastical matters, which the author cited both for the Fifth council and a little earlier for Justinian's Theopaschite edict (*Cod. Iust.* 1.1.6).

*Chronicon Paschale* allots 46 lines to the five councils plus the *Latrocinium*. Though still brief, this certainly provides more emphasis than Malalas, which,

6 For a rare discussion see E. Champlin, *Nero* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2003), 28.

7 Pauline Allen, *Evagrius Scholasticus the Church Historian*, Études et documents, vol. 41 (Louvain: Spicilegium sacrum lovaniense, 1981). For translation and commentary see Michael Whitby, *The Ecclesiastical History of Evagrius Scholasticus*, TTH, vol. 33 (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2000). On lxiii Whitby notes appropriately: "Pauline Allen's various studies of Evagrius have made the task of annotation much easier than it might have been. I have inevitably noted places where I am in disagreement . . . but that is because she has produced the authoritative treatment of Evagrius; such differences should not disguise the extent of my appreciation of her work."

8 Whitby, *Evagrius*, xxii.

given *Chronicon Paschale's* use of Malalas as a basic source, also underlines its reaction to Malalas' lack of interest.<sup>9</sup> This change in emphasis is revealed most obviously by a special dating used exclusively for the first four councils by the "year from the ascension to heaven of the Lord" (so notably not used for the *Latrocinium*), which by linking the councils to the ascension marked them as distinct from all other events. Yet despite its ecclesiastical focus and the author's access to some major documents, *Chronicon Paschale* does not provide much more about the actual content of the councils than does Malalas, though it does expand on the main issue with a pejorative statement about the main heresy or heretic under consideration at each of the four ecumenical councils but, perhaps surprisingly, not for the *Latrocinium*.<sup>10</sup> Thus:

In year 422 from the Ascension to heaven of the Lord, there took place in Chalcedon the fourth Synod of the 630 holy fathers against the abominable Eutyches and Dioscorus, bishop of Alexandria, who were indeed demoted.<sup>11</sup>

It has slightly longer statements for councils 1 to 3. For Nicaea it also claims that defining the faith resulted in the emperor being "victorious over all" with God arranging this, a claim of some significance in Byzantine imperial ideology. So even though *Chronicon Paschale* does not offer much more in the way of actual information, it certainly has raised the significance of the councils to a higher level.

*Chronicon Paschale's* treatment of the Fifth council, omitted by Malalas, is in outline similar to its treatment of the earlier councils with a brief but emotive statement about the main issue, though it reverts to its normal dating system. Here it needs noting that *Chronicon Paschale's* character changes considerably just before the entry. For its account of Justinian and his immediate

9 A lacuna deprives us of *Chron. Pasch.*'s account of Nero, though it does state (459.13–16) that Nero's death resulted from a Jewish plot stemming from Nero's execution of Pilate for his punishment of Christ.

10 Intriguingly as Michael Whitby and Mary Whitby, *Chronicon Paschale 284–628 AD*, TTH, vol. 7 (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 1989), xxvi and 82, n.268, point out, not only does the author have no more to say on the crucial Fourth council at Chalcedon than does Malalas, but also includes the *Latrocinium* without any critical comment, which taken together may suggest a miaphysite leaning. Their English translation is used here.

11 *Chron. Pasc.* 452 (L. Dindorf, ed., *Chronicon Paschale*, CSHB, vol. 11 [Bonn: Weber, 1832], 591): "Ἐτους υκβ' τῆς εἰς οὐρανοῦς ἀναλήψεως τοῦ κυρίου γέγονεν ἡ τετάρτη σύνοδος ἐν Χαλκηδῶνι τῶν χλ' ἁγίων πατέρων κατὰ τῶν μιαρῶν Εὐτυχοῦς καὶ Διοσκόρου ἐπισκόπου Ἀλεξανδρείας τῶν καὶ καθαιρεθέντων.

predecessors *Chronicon Paschale* had been following Malalas, but access to Malalas breaks off in 533 or possibly 534, presumably with the conclusion of Malalas' first edition and apparently without access to its later extension to 565.<sup>12</sup> Thereafter for approximately the next seventy years until the reign of Phokas, *Chronicon Paschale's* access to any material at all is spasmodic, limited to occasional but significant documents, which it quotes in full, and particular chronological calculations needed for the dating of Easter, a major factor in the chronicle, but with 55 of the 67 years from 535 to 601 left blank apart from the date. Thus still under the entry for AD 533 it cites Justinian's Theopaschite edict (*Cod. Iust.* 1.1.6), taking up some four pages of the Bonn text, with minor textual divergences and omissions but with a more impressive list of addressees than those in the preserved version of the code.<sup>13</sup> For the following year it has a single sentence on the second edition of *Codex Iustinianus*, possibly also taken from Malalas, and then nothing until 552 where it has its entry on the Fifth council.

In this year 25 of the reign of Justinian, the 11th after the sole consulship of Flavius Basilius, there took place in Constantinople the 5th Synod against the impious and abominable and unclean and pagan doctrines alien from Christianity of Origen and Didymus and Evagrius, the opponents of God, and of Theodore the impious and his Jewish writings, and against the unclean letter to Maris the Persian called that of Ibas, and the foolish writings of Theodoret against the 12 Chapters of Cyril, our most holy father and teacher.<sup>14</sup>

12 As Whitby and Whitby, *Chronicon Paschale*, 128, n.373, suggest.

13 The list in *Chron. Pasch.* is that of the five patriarchates plus arguably the two next most important cities in the empire, Thessaloniki, and Ephesus, which together with the patriarchates made up the seven major churches. The list in *Cod. Iust.* is just of cities subject to the patriarchate of Constantinople, and so omits Rome, Alexandria, and Thessaloniki, which suggests to me (despite the comments of Whitby and Whitby, *Chronicon Paschale*, 131, n.375) that the version in *Cod. Iust.* was taken from the copy just for the Constantinople patriarchate whereas *Chron. Pasch.* must have had highly privileged access to the original version for the entire empire. See Roger Scott, "Malalas and Justinian's Codification," in *Byzantine Papers*, ed. E. Jeffreys, M. Jeffreys, and A. Moffatt, ByzAus, vol. 1 (Canberra: Australian Association for Byzantine Studies, 1981), 16–17.

14 *Chron. Pasc.* 552 (CSHB 11.635): Τούτω τῷ κε' ἔτει τῆς Ἰουστινιανοῦ βασιλείας μετὰ τὴν ὑπατείαν Φλ. Βασιλείου τὸ 1α' μόνου γέγονεν ἡ ε' σύνοδος ἐν Κωνσταντινουπόλει κατὰ τῶν δυσσεβῶν καὶ μυσαρῶν καὶ ἀκαθάρτων καὶ ἀλλοτρῶν τοῦ χριστιανισμοῦ ἑλληνικῶν δογμάτων Ὠριγένους καὶ Διδύμου καὶ Εὐαγρίου τῶν θεομάχων καὶ Θεοδώρου τοῦ δυσσεβοῦς καὶ τῶν Ἰουδαϊκῶν αὐτοῦ συγγραμμάτων καὶ τῆς ἀκαθάρτου ἐπιστολῆς τῆς πρὸς Μάριν τὸν Πέρσην Ἰβὰ λεγομένης καὶ

*Chronicon Paschale* follows this account with the complete text of Justinian's edict on the Three Chapters, some 48 pages in the Bonn edition, itself preceded by a list of Justinian's imperial titles including six epithets and as victorious over eight countries. This certainly draws attention to the council quite emphatically and gives the impression that the edict was part of the council's proceedings. But despite its placing, the edict is not technically part of the proceedings but rather, as the Whitbys point out, a statement made in advance of "the decisions which the emperor intended the bishops to endorse."<sup>15</sup>

Possibly, as the Whitbys also suggest "the treatment in *CP* of the Three Chapters controversy (coupled with the lack of reference to the problems and ultimate failure of the initiative) reflects the author's interest in attempts to move away from Chalcedon in the search for a harmonizing formula."<sup>16</sup> But the use of the document, coupled with the different treatment of the fifth council from earlier ones, suggests that the author of *Chronicon Paschale* might have had difficulty in finding actual information about it (hindered as well by its omission from Malalas), but was determined to include some account of it in the chronicle.

#### 4 Theophanes

Although our next chronicler, Theophanes, writing in the early ninth century during the so-called Dark Age of Byzantium, only narrates the period from 284 to 813, he still qualifies as a universal chronicler in combination with his friend, George Synkellos, whose chronicle from creation to 283 he simply extends at George's request, using material collected by George. Theophanes appears not to have had access to *Chronicon Paschale*. For much of the fourth to sixth centuries he had to make do with Theodore Lector and Malalas for most of his basic information, which meant relying on Theodore Lector for the First to Fourth councils. But although Theophanes tended to copy his sources slavishly, he was also earnestly caught up in a huge contemporary issue, iconoclasm, and throughout his chronicle adapted his material in various ways to demonstrate that history revealed the practical necessity of orthodoxy, including

---

τῶν μωρῶν συγγραμμάτων Θεοδωρήτου τῶν κατὰ τῶν ἰβ' κεφαλαίων Κυρίλλου τοῦ ἀγιωτάτου πατρὸς ἡμῶν καὶ διδασκάλου.

15 Whitby and Whitby, *Chronicon Paschale*, 134, n.383.

16 *Ibid.*, with reference to their introduction as well.

iconodulism.<sup>17</sup> Whereas Malalas was chronicling Christianity's victory over paganism in which the precise rules of belief and governance of the Christian church were relatively unimportant, and *Chronicon Paschale* was content with making clear that councils were special and distinct from secular events without attempting to draw lessons from this, Theophanes' *Chronographia* aimed to show the importance of orthodoxy and God's practical support for it and punishment of heresy. In this context councils necessarily assumed a different status from that in his predecessors. Just the space devoted to the first four councils plus the *Latrocinium*<sup>18</sup> (185 lines as against Malalas' 12 and *Chronicon Paschale*'s 37) is enough to show a very considerable difference in emphasis. Theophanes draws attention to each council being summoned by an emperor (hence emphasising their imperial status), and the importance of emperors being orthodox and treating bishops appropriately. For Nicaea especially, there is emphasis on the presence of those who survived the persecutions, such as (at the opening of the narrative) the presence of:

the three hundred and eighteen fathers, of whom many were miracle-workers and equal to the angels, carrying the stigmata of Christ on their bodies from previous persecutions.<sup>19</sup>

and later at the imperial banquet, where the emperor:

kissed Paphnoutios and other confessors on their eyes that had been gouged out and their limbs that had been mutilated in the persecution, receiving a blessing from them.<sup>20</sup>

Theophanes also provides rather more information on the proceedings and the actual theological issues raised at each council, enough in a world chronicle to draw attention to the event, which had not been the case with Malalas. Over 30 lines are devoted to each of councils One, Two, Three, and the

17 I have discussed this elsewhere. See Roger Scott, "Later Image of Constantine," "Events of Every Year," and "From Propaganda to History to Literature," all reprinted in *Byzantine Chronicles and the Sixth Century* (Farnham: Variorum, 2012).

18 Thus Nicaea 1 gets an initial narrative of 34 lines followed by a further 20 lines and an 8-line anecdote that gets picked up in later chronicles—this in contrast to Malalas' 3 lines and *Chronicon Paschale*'s 11.

19 Theophanes, *Chron.* AM 5816 (Carl de Boor, ed., *Theophanis Chronographia*, vol. 1 [Leipzig: Teubner, 1883], 21): τῶν τῆς πατέρων, ὧν οἱ πολλοὶ θαυματουργοὶ τε καὶ ἰσάγγελοι ὑπήρχον, τὰ στίγματα τοῦ Χριστοῦ ἐν τῷ σώματι φέροντες ἐκ τῶν προλαβόντων διωγμῶν.

20 *Ibid.*: Παφνουτίου δὲ καὶ τῶν ὁμοίων ὁμολογητῶν τοὺς ἐξορυχθέντας ὀφθαλμοὺς καὶ τὰ πηρωθέντα μέλη ἐν τῷ διωγμῷ κατεφιλεῖ, ἀγιασμὸν ἐξ αὐτῶν ποριζόμενος.

*Latrocinium*. Chalcedon surprisingly only gets 20 lines but that is still considerably more than Malalas' two lines and *Chronicon Paschale's* four, and its pivotal importance is brought out by the frequency of further precise references to it in following years: AM 5945, 5949, 5950, 5952, 5967, 5968, 5983, 5984, 5991, 5999, 6001, 6002, 6003, 6004, 6005, 6008, 6011, 6013, and a late reference at 6121 (A.D. 628/629) with its effect on the narrative implicit elsewhere as well.

That would suggest that Theophanes would also have wanted to give some emphasis to the Fifth council and to provide at least a reasonably coherent account. But here he evidently faced a revealing problem in that it occurred after Theodore Lector's narrative had ended, while Malalas had omitted it (and seemingly Theophanes had no access to *Chronicon Paschale*, though it too knew little of it). He offers just six lines where his lack of knowledge is revealed by his rather desperate and evasive statement that "many matters were raised." All that Theophanes knows is that the council dealt with Origen and the Three Chapters but he knows no details, not even the number of bishops attending.

He appears to spread Constantinople II awkwardly across two years, with just a single sentence to mark the council in its appropriate position (AM 6172) while previously stating the main points briefly but adequately a year earlier at AM 6171. The division in fact reveals Theophanes' deliberate exploitation of the council. By detaching most of his material from its proper place, he exploits it to cover an unexpected military defeat and to provide his verdict on Constantine IV, an emperor who, in Theophanes' opinion, did his best to restore orthodoxy and overcome the empire's enemies. After defeat by the Bulgars, all:

were astonished to hear that [Constantine] who had subjugated everyone . . . was vanquished by this foul and newly-arisen tribe. But he believed that this had happened to the Christians by God's providence and made peace in the spirit of the Gospels; and until his death he remained undisturbed by his enemies. His particular concern was to unite God's holy churches which had everywhere been divided from the days of the emperor Herakleios, his great grandfather, and of the heretical Sergius and Pyrrhos, who had unworthily presided over the see of Constantinople and had taught one will and one energy in our Lord God and saviour Jesus Christ. Being anxious to refute their evil beliefs, the same most Christian emperor convened at Constantinople an ecumenical council of 289 bishops.<sup>21</sup>

21 Ibid., AM 6171 (De Boor, *Theophanis Chronographia*, 1.359–60): ὅτι ὁ πάντας ὑποτελεῖς ἑαυτῷ καταστησάμενος . . . ὑπὸ τοῦδε μυσάρου καὶ νεοφανοῦς ἔθνους ἠττήθη. ἀλλ' οὗτος μὲν ἐκ προνοίας θεοῦ τοῦτο συμβεβηκέναι Χριστιανοῖς πιστεύσας, εὐαγγελικῶς διανοησάμενος,

Then follow the details of the council, almost exactly as in Nikephoros' *Breviarium* 37, which, however, has none of Theophanes' introductory explanatory material.

Theophanes appears to have omitted the *in Trullo* but there is a lengthy excursus on it at AM 6177. Here there is scholarly agreement that the entry is a late insert and not part of the original, given that it offers a forceful anti-iconodule argument.<sup>22</sup> The happy rejection of iconoclasm at the Seventh council (AM 6280), a key moment in the chronicle, is naturally narrated in suitably glowing terms. Theophanes prepares his audience for this with his lengthy justification of Tarasios' somewhat dubious appointment as patriarch (AM 6277) and an angry account of the failed council of 786, which retained iconoclasm:

The bishops who shared the wicked views of the soldiers went out shouting "We have won!" By God's grace those inhuman madmen did not hurt anyone.<sup>23</sup>

Whereas at the successful Nicaea II:

the council introduced no new doctrine, but maintained unshaken the doctrines of the holy and blessed Fathers; it rejected the new heresy. . . . And so God's Church found peace, even though the Enemy does not cease from sowing his tares among his own workmen; but God's Church when she is under attack always proves victorious.<sup>24</sup>

---

εἰρήνευσεν· καὶ ἦν ἕως τελευτῆς αὐτοῦ ἡρεμῶν ἐκ πάντων πολέμων, σπουδῆν ἔχων ἐξαίρετον ἐνώσαι τὰς ἀπανταχῆ διηρημέναις ἀγίας τοῦ θεοῦ ἐκκλησίας ἀπὸ τῶν χρόνων Ἡρακλείου τοῦ βασιλέως καὶ προπάππου αὐτοῦ, καὶ Σεργίου τοῦ κακόφρονος καὶ Πύρρου, τῶν ἀναξίως ἡγησαμένων τοῦ θρόνου Κωνσταντινουπόλεως, μίαν τε θέλησιν καὶ μίαν ἐνέργειαν ἐπὶ τοῦ κυρίου καὶ θεοῦ καὶ σωτῆρος ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ δογματισάντων, ὧν τὰς κακοδοξίας ἀνατρέψαι σπουδάζων ὁ χριστιανικώτατος βασιλεὺς σύνοδον οἰκουμενικὴν συναθροίσας ἐπισκόπων σπθ' ἐν Κωνσταντινουπόλει.

22 See Cyril Mango and Roger Scott, *The Chronicle of Theophanes Confessor: Byzantine and Near Eastern History AD 284–813* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1997), lxii and at 504–506. It is printed but rejected by de Boor, though it was accepted by Anastasius, the papal librarian, and retained in his Latin translation (de Boor, *Theophanis Chronographia*, 2.229–30) and also verbatim by pseudo-Symeon (191v.15–192r.17).

23 Theophanes, *Chron.* AM 6278 (de Boor, *Theophanis Chronographia*, 1.461–62): καὶ ἐν τῷ βήματι εἰσελθόντος μετὰ τῶν ὀρθοδόξων ἐπίσκοποι ἐξῆλθον πρὸς αὐτοὺς βοῶντες τὸ, νενικήκαμεν· καὶ τοῦ θεοῦ χάριτι οὐδένα ἠδίκησαν οἱ μανιώδεις ἐκεῖνοι καὶ ἀπάνθρωποι.

24 *Ibid.*, AM 6280 (de Boor, *Theophanis Chronographia*, 1.462–63): οὐδὲν καινὸν δογματίσασα, ἀλλὰ τὰ τῶν ἁγίων καὶ μακαρίων πατέρων δόγματα ἀσάλευτα φυλάξασα, καὶ τὴν νεὰν αἴρῃσιν



Indeed Nicaea II effectively fulfilled Theophanes' requirements for ecumenical councils and in a way sums up the significance of ecumenical councils in history for Theophanes, justifying his treatment of them.

## 5 George the Monk

George the Monk (henceforward GM or George), produced his chronicle in the late ninth century as the Dark Age ended, so in a culture of trying to rediscover the past.<sup>25</sup> Faced with the lack of real information provided by the chronicle tradition, he clearly tried to rectify this. Most notable is the amount of space he devotes to the First council (150 lines) and that he provides our only actual record in Greek of the Fifth (otherwise surviving only in western Latin records), but he also provides far more detailed accounts of all the other ecumenical councils, though he ignores completely both *Latrocinium* and *in Trullo*.

For the first four councils, George made use of the fifth-century church historians, Socrates, Sozomen, and Theodoret. For Nicaea, given the detail he provides, it seems likely that he used them directly rather than in the combined narrative provided by Theodore Lector, in which case he is the first and only chronicler to do so. He probably also used Rufinus' *Historia ecclesiastica*, again the only chronicler to do so. For the Second, Fourth, and possibly the Third, he might have restricted himself to Theodore Lector's combined narrative but still provided more detail than Theophanes did from the same source. For the Fifth, ignored by Malalas and seemingly beyond the research skills available to *Chronicon Paschale* and Theophanes, George was able to get hold of the actual text of Justinian's decree and part of the *acta* some three centuries after the event, which must have required some effort, and incorporate it verbatim in his chronicle, so providing the only record in Greek that survives. He was likewise able to provide the complete text of canon 82 of the Sixth council. This combination suggests that he had access to a library or archive, probably the patriarch's library.<sup>26</sup> But it is noteworthy that not only did he probably have

---

ἀποκηρύξασα . . . καὶ εἰρήνευσεν ἡ τοῦ θεοῦ ἐκκλησία, εἰ καὶ ὁ ἐχθρὸς τὰ ἑαυτοῦ ζιζάνια ἐν τοῖς ἰδίοις ἐργάταις σπείρειν οὐ παύεται· ἀλλ' ἡ τοῦ θεοῦ ἐκκλησία πάντοτε πολεμουμένη νικᾷ.

25 For that culture see Robert Browning, "Byzantine Scholarship," *Past and Present* 28 (1964): 3–20.

26 In the title of one eleventh-century manuscript the author is called 'George the Ecumenical Teacher', assigning him the post at the patriarchal school. See Warren Treadgold, *The Middle Byzantine Historians* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), chapter 3.



such access but that he made the effort to use it. He certainly seems determined to say more about councils than had his predecessors.

What George wrote, however, was not really so much a universal chronicle as in effect a lesson in religion, emphasising that orthodox Christianity was the only true religion and that God demands total obedience, severely punishing those who fail. His work of a little over 800 pages appears oddly named as “Concise History” (Χρονικὸν Σύνοτον) but by that title George probably indicated that he was ignoring unnecessary secular history as much as he could to allow him to concentrate on more edifying ‘useful’ history. Hence for him the councils naturally held a special importance.

He clearly gave special importance to Nicaea I, the First council, assembled by Constantine, to which he devotes some 150 lines. It is not, however, just the space that he devotes that is significant but his handling of the whole council and his use of source material. He is greatly aware of it as a big occasion, with the emperor treating Christian clergy as special for the first time in Christian history; he provides a far more detailed account (22 lines) of the main issue of Arianism than in earlier chronicles; he draws attention to a supposed miracle associated with the council; he combines an account of a confessor present at the council with that confessor’s influence in persuading the council to separate clergy from bishops on the right to marry; and he concludes by setting out the council’s action in defining *homoousion* and anathematising Arius and those who rejected that definition, enforced through the emperor exiling them. The account is carefully structured to draw attention to all the council’s significant features, and to achieve it George has turned to a different source for each item. Thus he had opened with a basic account of the arrangements for the council taken from Theodoret, with no theology but rather emphasising Constantine’s reverence, modesty and especially his concern for the well-being of the attending clergy. This is followed by Alexander of Alexandria’s letter taken from Socrates, while the supposed miracle is taken perhaps from Rufinus or Gelasius of Cyzicus.<sup>27</sup> All this places the account of the council at a new level in chronicles.

For Constantinople I, the Second council, GM has a shorter account of some 36 lines, dealing first largely with Gregory of Nazianzus’ resignation as patriarch, then with the council’s leaders and their anathematising Macedonius, Sabellius, and Apollinarius of Laodicea, with a brief explanation of their respective heresies. The account of the council introduces and by implication links various stories on the emperor’s need to support orthodoxy vigorously.

27 Further detail on the sources is available in the *apparatus criticus* of the de Boor-Wirth edition.

Significantly, he has nothing on the council's promotion of Constantinople as a patriarchate (even though Theophanes had included it), revealing his focus on theology at the expense of administration.

His material for Ephesus I (605.9–606.22, some 34 lines) is roughly similar to that in Theophanes but clearly not taken from him. The *Latrocinium* is overlooked. Though Chalcedon (611.18–612.20) gets more than earlier chronicles it is still brief (23 lines) but does discuss the theology. His accounts of the next two councils are remarkable for providing respectively (as mentioned above) the unique Greek version of the emperor's opening letter and part of the *acta* for the Fifth (629.1–640.27, some 304 lines), and canon 82 of the Sixth council (725.14–727.15, some 41 lines). He is also the earliest chronicler to 'know' the number of bishops (265) attending the Fifth. Notable too, but typical of GM, is that his account of the Fifth, which occurred in 553, is placed immediately before the plague of 542: theology was more important than chronology. The *in Trullo* is not mentioned, presumably being of no interest to GM for his "Concise History" because it dealt really just with the administrative arrangements for implementing the decisions of the Fifth and Sixth councils rather than with their theological content. The Seventh (769.10–770.9) is likewise dealt with briefly, dismissed as just overturning iconoclasm and restoring icons, listing those who led the council and those anathematised by it, so merely an administrative matter rather than involving theology.

In short, Nicaea I is dealt with in detail and cleverly emphasised in a narrative construction; for the Second, Third, and Fourth GM clearly had access to good accounts of the theological issues and summarised these effectively, while omitting such administrative details as the ranking of Constantinople as next to Rome at Constantinople I; for the Fifth and Sixth he is able to quote at length official documents that gave the main theological material, providing the only Greek record of the Fifth to survive; he virtually dismisses the Seventh (restoration of iconodulism) as an administrative arrangement of what Irene had already decreed. So GM differs greatly from his predecessors in providing much more material, but after Nicaea I he concentrates almost exclusively on the theological issues.

## 6 Tenth and Eleventh Centuries

We might well expect the clear literary build-up in the treatment of the ecumenical councils in Byzantine chronicles from the sixth century to the late ninth to continue. In fact what is intriguing about the tenth- and eleventh-century chronicles, Symeon Logothete, pseudo-Symeon, and Psellos, is their brevity.

## 7 Symeon Logothete

Symeon Logothete's treatment of the councils in his chronicle from creation to 948 might seem almost absurdly brief, with each of the first five councils dealt with in a single simple one-clause sentence, with a slightly longer sentence for the Sixth. For Nicaea II he devotes some 14 lines, abbreviated from Theophanes, at least showing a modicum of interest unlike his treatment of the First to Sixth.<sup>28</sup> It is, however, a short chronicle. In Wahlgren's fine edition the text occupies 339 pages of which I estimate that at least a third is devoted to an informative *apparatus criticus*. Symeon in effect covers creation to 948 in about the equivalent of 200 complete pages. Furthermore the early part of the chronicle was probably taken from an epitome with Symeon's own contribution encompassing just 842–948. So creation to 842, to which GM by comparison devoted 800 pages in his *Historia syntomos*, takes up 227 Wahlgren pages, equivalent perhaps to about 150 pages without *apparatus*, but still also including rather more secular material than George managed in 800 pages. So the brevity on councils is simply in keeping with it really being a *Historia syntomos*, though its actual title is simply *Chronikon*.

## 8 Pseudo-Symeon

By comparison with Symeon Logothete, the as yet unedited pseudo-Symeon's treatment of councils is detailed,<sup>29</sup> but in effect is just a copy of Theophanes, though following a manuscript tradition rejected by Theophanes' editor, de Boor, with a few additions and occasional omissions. Its bits of additional information possibly represent the author's own knowledge or invention, rather than evidence of an additional source. Thus for Chalcedon it adds a phrase in praise of Proterios, Dioscorus' successor as patriarch of Alexandria, as "a man endowed with intelligence and piety." For Nicaea it adds to Theophanes' list of three expelled Arians (de Boor, 1.22.7–9) "and the other heresiarchs." For the *Latrocinium* a sentence is omitted through haplography but restored

28 Symeon Logothete, *Chron.* 124.9–10 (S. Wahlgren, ed., *Symeonis Magistri et Logothetae Chronicon*, CFHB, vol. 44/1 [Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2006], 199).

29 As it remains unedited it is worth giving the manuscript references: Nicaea (86v.15–87r.11); Constantinople I (98v.17–23); Ephesus (105r.11–105v.30); the *Latrocinium* (107v.16–108r.7); Chalcedon (109r.16–36); Constantinople II (146r.7–13); Constantinople III (191r.27–30); the *in Trullo* (191v.15–192r.17); and Nicaea II (223v.8–22).

by a different hand in the margin. Alterations to Ephesus I are a bit more complicated. After 105v.25 pseudo-Symeon rearranges Theophanes' narrative by postponing Theophanes' short story on Nonnos consecrating the prostitute Margarito as Pelagia and his instructing his patriarch John to cleanse the church of Nestorian tares (pseudo-Symeon, 105v.30–36; de Boor, 1.91.26–92.1) to narrate instead Nestorios' fate (pseudo-Symeon, 105v.25–28; de Boor, 1.91.1–4) and adding a comparison with Arius' fate from an unknown source (pseudo-Symeon, 105v.28–30), before returning to the Nonnos story. So the copying is not unthinking. It also accepts verbatim from Theophanes the intrusive false entry on the *in Trullo*. But despite these and other minor variants, pseudo-Symeon is very close to being totally reliant on Theophanes.

## 9 Psellos' *Historia syntomos*

Another eleventh-century text, *Historia syntomos* disputedly attributed to Michael Psellos, author of the famed *Chronographia* (which is more a history than a chronicle), was perhaps written to teach the young prince who became Michael VII his history, and is not a universal chronicle in that it begins with Roman history, i.e. the history of Roman emperors, though his Roman emperors begin with Romulus. It is written, however, with an unchronicle elegance and with narrative history rather subsumed by climaxing each reign with a selection of an emperor's famous sayings. It does, however, work in briefly all the ecumenical councils except Ephesus. Despite its brevity, the author clearly accepts the ecumenical councils as important in 'Roman' history, though without also needing to give ecclesiastical history any emphasis. The narrative fits the councils neatly into an appropriate context in what is a brief and elegant, if sometimes surprising, overview of Roman history.

## 10 Kedrenos

Late in the next century or early in the twelfth, Kedrenos, quite probably writing for a monastic audience, produced a lengthy chronicle that has a poor reputation among Byzantinists for being entirely plagiarised. It is, however, now also being recognised that Kedrenos did read widely, so we might also hope for some valuable information not otherwise preserved as he occasionally does for other topics. In fact he provides no new information on councils, but his accounts are both solid and entertaining, suited to the sophisticated environment of his time. His actual material on councils is certainly taken

entirely from earlier chronicles, but his arrangement and presentation are distinctively his own. Overall his *Synopsis historion* follows a chronological structure seemingly entirely based on pseudo-Symeon into which Kedrenos works occasional extra material based on his wide reading but especially exploits GM for theology and ecclesiastical material; though perhaps this should be seen the other way round, in that he turns to pseudo-Symeon to make up for George's lack of material on secular history. But for councils what is particularly remarkable is his attempt to make them more memorable, either by working a delightful story into his account of each council or by attaching such a story immediately after his account so that what is really an irrelevant story appears to be part of his account of the council. It is as though he is aware that the difficult theological intricacies, important though they are, may well be forgotten unless linked somehow to a more memorable context. His work is not perhaps good history, but was probably more likely to be remembered and have an impact than earnest good history would. Kedrenos' chronicle belongs to a different literary world from its predecessors.

Kedrenos' approach and technique are clearest for Constantinople II. He begins by copying (but slightly simplifying) GM on those attending, but then inserts Severus as the heretic under attack (as likewise had Symeon Logothete and Psellos) plus a statement on the years separating this council from the First, before returning to GM's statement that the council was against Origen and so including Justinian's opening letter to the council and part of the first session all copied verbatim from GM, a hefty section of 253 lines. Whereas GM then moves on to the plague of 542 with his normal disregard for chronology, Kedrenos apparently felt the need for light relief and produced two delightful stories of piety being rewarded, utterly irrelevant but from their placement likely to be remembered as somehow linked to the council. Since he attaches lively stories to each of the other councils except the First, where instead, this time following GM, he emphasises what he claims is a miracle story linked to the council ("But it is not right to pass by in silence the miracle that occurred in the council", 502), the approach is surely deliberate. Clearly Kedrenos was keen to give ecumenical councils a significant place in his chronicle, which is reinforced for the Sixth where, after following GM verbatim including copying canon 82, he adds a paragraph, whether his own or from an unknown source, on local councils, plus a summary of each of the first six ecumenical ones. It is only for the Seventh that he adds nothing, but for it his narrative is instead taken ultimately from Theophanes (presumably via pseudo-Symeon) rather than GM, and, like Theophanes, it effectively summed up for him the significance of ecumenical councils in history, if that was not already achieved by his summary after the Sixth.

## 11 Zonaras

Later in the twelfth century Zonaras produced his enormously long *Epitome historion* of over 2,000 pages from creation to 1118, written far more elegantly than other chronicles, Psellos apart, but still 'universal' in its coverage. He is more adept at working his accounts of councils into his narrative than his predecessors, so they do not appear as isolated items. Although he does not supply new information (nor does he provide dates), it is more difficult to spot his sources since he is careful not to copy verbatim, though arguably he exploits GM's extra material. In general his treatment of events is clear, solid and sensible, so Kedrenos' entertaining stories are missing as not needed, but he does manage to emphasise the orthodoxy of Chalcedon by including (and accepting) the story of the dead Euphemia giving her blessing to the right version of the text from her tomb in her church at Chalcedon, a story first attested by Constantine of Tios in about 800 and not occurring elsewhere in the chronicle tradition.

## 12 Conclusion

The treatment of ecumenical councils as part of world history certainly changes across the period, even if it does not develop quite consistently. Both Malalas in the sixth century, at the beginning of the tradition, and Symeon Logothete in the tenth seem scarcely interested in them. For Malalas this can be explained by his understanding of what was important. Meetings of bishops to sort out Christianity's internal wranglings were of little significance in tracking God's overall plan for humankind with the eventual victory of Christianity over paganism, and probably only deserved being mentioned at all because they were summoned by emperors. Symeon's brevity, rather than indicating lack of interest, is probably not inappropriate in a genuinely brief chronicle. So it is reasonable to state that all the chronicles after Malalas do pay appropriate attention to councils, being written in a period when, with Christianity's victory assured, divisions within the church assumed a greater significance both for the church and for secular affairs. Here we can follow first *Chronicon Paschale* in the early seventh century drawing attention to councils with a separate dating system that linked councils to the ascension; then Theophanes in the early ninth century during Byzantium's Dark Age used his chronicle to show through past events the practical need for gaining God's support through orthodoxy, and hence the need for establishing correct belief and eliminating heresy, for which the councils played a vital role. Theophanes, however, was still restricted in his knowledge by the limitations of his sources.

Later in the same century, as the Dark Age came to its end, George the Monk, very possibly a teacher at the patriarchal school, must have gone to some effort to rectify this deficiency both by finding and reading the earlier ecclesiastical histories and also, remarkably, the councils' actual *acta*. He was not, however, writing a standard chronicle himself but more a lesson in religion, and so omitted secular material as much as he could. Although the chroniclers of the next century failed to build on his work, this was probably to suit the needs of their respective chronicles, and pseudo-Symeon did provide a reasonable summary of Theophanes' account of the councils as well as an adequate account of secular material. That allowed Kedrenos in the sophisticated late eleventh or early twelfth century to create a chronicle of which scarcely a word was his own, but which created something new and worthwhile by incorporating both secular material largely taken from pseudo-Symeon and ecclesiastical material from George, as well as extra material from outside the chronicle tradition based on his own wide reading. Notably he added entertaining stories to his accounts of most councils, as if aware that heavy theological material needed some sort of sweetener to be palatable. His chronicle and that of his near contemporary Zonaras in quite different ways both provide narratives that draw proper attention to the ecumenical councils in their secular contexts, though by then that secular context was thoroughly infused with ecclesiastical affairs; it was also a period of considerable literary sophistication, a world in which the universal chronicle was necessarily something utterly different from that offered by Malalas.

### Bibliography

- Chronicon Paschale* (L. Dindorf, ed., *Chronicon Paschale*, CSHB, vols 11 and 12. Bonn: Weber, 1832. English translation in Michael Whitby and Mary Whitby, *Chronicon Paschale 284–628 AD*, TTH, vol. 7. Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 1989).
- Evagrius. *Historia ecclesiastica* (J. Bidez and L. Parmentier, eds, *The Ecclesiastical History of Evagrius with the Scholia*. London: Methuen, 1898. English translation in Michael Whitby, *The Ecclesiastical History of Evagrius Scholasticus*, TTH, vol. 33. Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2000).
- George the Monk. *Chronicon* (C. de Boor, ed., rev. P. Wirth, *Georgii Monachi Chronicon*, BSGR, 2 vols. Stuttgart: Teubner, 1978).
- Kedrenos. *Synopsis historion* (Immanuel Bekker, ed., *Georgius Cedrenus. Ioannis Scylitzae Ope*, CSHB, vols 8 and 9. Bonn: Weber, 1838–1839).



- John Malalas. *Chronographia* (J. Thurn, ed., *Ioannis Malalae Chronographia*, CFHB, vol. 35. Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2000. English translation in E. Jeffreys, M. Jeffreys, R. Scott et al., *The Chronicle of John Malalas. A Translation*, ByzAus, vol. 4. Melbourne: Australian Association for Byzantine Studies, 1986).
- Nikephoros. *Breviarium* (Cyril Mango, ed. and trans., *Nikephoros Patriarch of Constantinople, Short History*, DOT, vol. 10. Washington, D.C.: Dumbarton Oaks, 1990).
- Michael Psellos. *Historia Syntomos* (Willem J. Aerts, ed. and trans., *Michaelis Pselli Historia syntomos*, CFHB, vol. 30. Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1990).
- Pseudo-Symeon. *Chronographia*, in *Parisinus Graecus* 1712.
- Symeon Logothete. *Chronicon* (S. Wahlgren, ed., *Symeonis Magistri et Logothetae Chronicon*, CFHB, vol. 44/1. Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2006).
- Synodicon Vetus* (J. Duffy and J. Parker, eds and trans., *The Synodicon Vetus: Text, Translation, and Notes*, DOT, vol. 5. Washington, D.C.: Dumbarton Oaks, 1979).
- Theophanes. *Chronographia* (Carl Gotthard de Boor, ed., *Theophanis Chronographia*, 2 vols. Leipzig: Teubner, 1883–1885. English translation in Cyril Mango, Roger Scott, and Geoffrey Greatrex, *The Chronicle of Theophanes Confessor: Byzantine and Near Eastern History AD 284–813*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1997).
- Zonaras. *Epitomae historiarum* (M. Pinder and Theodor Büttner-Wobst, eds, *Ioannis Zonarae Annales*, CSHB, vols 47, 48, and 49. Bonn: Weber, 1841–1897; and L. Dindorf, ed., *Ioannis Zonarae Epitome historiarum*, 6 vols. Leipzig: Teubner, 1868–1875).
- Allen, Pauline. *Evagrius Scholasticus the Church Historian*, Études et documents, vol. 41. Louvain: Spicilegium sacrum lovaniense, 1981.
- Browning, Robert. "Byzantine Scholarship." *Past and Present* 28 (1964): 3–20.
- Burke, John, Roger Scott, and Paul Tuffin, "Originality via Plagiarism in the Byzantine Chronicle of Kedrenos." In *Companion to Byzantine Chronicles*, edited by R. Tocchi. Leiden: Brill, forthcoming.
- Champlin, E. *Nero*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2003.
- Croke, Brian. *Christian Chronicles and Byzantine History, 5th–6th Centuries*. Aldershot: Variorum, 1992.
- Markopoulos, A. *Ἡ Χρονογραφία τοῦ Ψευδοσυμεῶν καὶ οἱ πηγές τοῦ*. PhD thesis, University of Ioannina, 1978.
- Nilsson, I., and R. Scott, "Towards a New History of Byzantine Literature: The Case of Historiography." *Classica et Mediaevalia* 58 (2007): 319–32.
- Odorico, P., P.A. Agapitos, and M. Hinterberger, eds, *L'Écriture de la mémoire: la littérature de l'historiographie*, Dossiers Byzantins, vol. 6. Paris: Centre d'études byzantines, néo-helléniques et sud-est européennes, École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales, 2006.



- Scott, Roger. "Malalas and Justinian's Codification." In *Byzantine Papers*, edited by E. Jeffreys, M. Jeffreys, and A. Moffatt, ByzAus, vol. 1, 12–31. Canberra: Australian Association for Byzantine Studies, 1981.
- . "The Later Image of Constantine in Malalas and Theophanes." In *New Constantines: The Rhythm of Imperial Renewal in Byzantium, 4th–13th Centuries*, edited by P. Magdalino, 57–71. Aldershot: Variorum, 1994.
- . "'The Events of Every Year Arranged without Confusion': Justinian and Others in the Chronicle of Theophanes Confessor." In *L'Écriture de la mémoire: la littérature de l'historiographie*, edited by P. Odorico, P.A. Agapitos, and M. Hinterberger, Dossiers Byzantins, vol. 6, 49–65. Paris: Centre d'études byzantines, néo-helléniques et sud-est européennes, École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales, 2006.
- . "From Propaganda to History to Literature: The Byzantine Stories of Theodosios' Apple and Marcian's Eagles." In *History as Literature in Byzantium*, edited by R. Macrides, 115–31. Aldershot: Variorum, 2010.
- . *Byzantine Chronicles and the Sixth Century*. Farnham: Variorum, 2012.
- Treadgold, Warren. *The Early Byzantine Historians*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007.
- . *The Middle Byzantine Historians*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013.

## Flights of Fancy: Some Imaginary Debates in Late Antiquity

*Averil Cameron*

Since her doctoral work on the ecclesiastical history of Evagrius Scholasticus, subsequently published as her first book,<sup>1</sup> Pauline Allen has been an unfailing and indefatigable elucidator of Greek Christian texts from late antiquity, and especially those from the sixth and seventh centuries. From ecclesiastical history to homiletic and heresiology, she has opened up the possibilities for other scholars with her critical editions, commentaries, and discussions. She has guided younger colleagues and pupils and inspired collective research on a scale one can only describe as impressive. And hers has been and remains a major voice in the field of patristics, not only in Australia but also internationally through the International Association for Patristic Studies and her own regular appearances at the Oxford Patristic Conferences. That Pauline was once my student seems extraordinary today, when we celebrate her own huge and sustained contribution to patristics as a profession and an academic field. She is a scholar who has never been afraid of making others think, or of giving them good questions to think about. I am delighted to offer her these thoughts about a question that has intrigued me for some time and that I hope she will find interesting too.

I have long been interested in the more literary and rhetorical features of Christian writing and in the thought processes and emotion in the minds of those who wrote. It is one of the great shifts in modern approaches to late antique and early Byzantine texts that the role played by these aspects and their importance are now taken for granted, in sharp contrast to the old positivistic attitude that saw genres such as hagiography only in terms of the

---

\* I wish to express my thanks to numerous colleagues for different kinds of help in relation to the material discussed in this chapter, notably Sébastien Morlet, Patrick Andrist, Immacolata Aulisa, Jan Willem Drijvers, Guy Stroumsa, Paola Francesca Moretti, Tessa Canella, and Christian Boudignon. In the collaborative world that we now inhabit, conversations with many others at recent workshops and conferences have also been extremely helpful.

1 Pauline Allen, *Evagrius Scholasticus the Church Historian*, Études et documents, vol. 41 (Leuven: Spicilegium Sacrum Lovaniense, 1981).

historical information that could be gained from them. Pauline Allen herself has opened up the field of preaching in late antiquity and shown how much this too can benefit from such an approach. Heresiography is another type of writing that was very central in Christian late antiquity, and one that Pauline has addressed in her work on Severus of Antioch and Sophronius. In her work on Maximus Confessor she also dealt with a highly complex, and indeed tangled, body of material connected with the events of the seventh century, the aftermath of the Lateran Synod of 649 and Maximus' trials, exile, and subsequent death—events which are even now only poorly understood, but which gave rise to a rich variety of writing by contemporaries. We are perhaps only now beginning to realise just how complex and how vast is the amount of written material produced by Christian authors overall, and how much remains to be done in terms of a complete rather than a selective understanding of their multifaceted works. The distribution, reception, and textual history of these works are also important parts of this process, which need to be understood if we are to do justice to the efforts of contemporaries to make their voices and their views heard. Much, indeed most, of this writing was designed to achieve specific goals, and to put messages across. But along with this, and with the promotion of particular viewpoints, went a complementary, not of course contradictory, but equally striking, flowering of the imagination, and this is what I want to address here.

The question of fictionality in Christian writing is one that has recently been raised in relation to the early Christian period,<sup>2</sup> in the context of a growing but still relatively new interest in the issue of whether Christians (by which I mean writers with a clearly Christian purpose) can be said to have engaged in 'literature' at all. Most obviously, the question of fictionality (often linked to narrativity, but not necessarily always associated with it) arises in relation to such works as the apocryphal 'Acts' of the late second and third centuries, effectively Christian novels, with a high degree of imaginative and fanciful content, and many of the ingredients of romance and story-telling associated with quite different contexts. Fiction in saints' lives is also well recognised, at least in the sense that some elements are seen to be much less 'historical' or 'reliable' than others. Both the apocryphal *acta* and Christian saints' lives

---

2 For instance Ronald F. Hock, J. Bradley Chance, and Judith Perkins, eds, *Ancient Fiction and Early Christian Narrative* (Atlanta, Ga: Scholars Press, 1998); G.H. Rebenich, "Hagiographic Fiction as Entertainment," in *Latin Fiction: the Latin Novel in Context*, ed. H. Hofmann (London and New York: Routledge, 1999), 187–212; and Grammatiki A. Karla, ed., *Fiction on the Fringe: Novelistic Writing in the Post-Classical Age*, Mnemosyne Supplements. Monographs on Greek and Roman Language and Literature, vol. 310 (Leiden: Brill, 2009).

are narrative genres, and indeed genres of story-telling, where an element of fiction has seemed to scholars to constitute at least a likely possibility (or indeed often enough a danger to the historical reliability that most still look for). And as I argued long ago, telling stories was a vital part of the spreading of Christian ideas in the early Christian period and late antiquity, alongside the promotion of belief-systems and the move to systematise Christian thought and Christian knowledge.

Many other kinds of apocryphal stories also flourished from an early date. They gave alternative versions but also filled in the gaps in the Gospel accounts that caused the curious to ask questions, embroidered the laconic statements or implications in more authoritative sources, and supplied coherent narratives where the latter were lacking. No surprise if competing versions grew up, or if adaptation, selection and translation modified earlier examples. This literature, and its oral and written transmission across regions and languages in late antiquity remain among the more neglected features of what we may still with all due care call the process of Christianisation. Nor did the flowering of fictionality end in late antiquity, and the urge to apocryphisation continued as a product of, and response to, lively Christian curiosity long into the Byzantine and medieval periods and later.<sup>3</sup>

I use the term 'literature' for convenience, although whether it is justifiable to think in terms of a Christian 'literature' at all is a question that still needs to be seriously addressed, and one that raises many ancillary questions about authorship, audience, dissemination, and levels of understanding, quite apart from the well-known theoretical issues inherent in the very term.<sup>4</sup> But at least there is now much greater interest in Christian writing in late antiquity in relation to how works were written and what their literary aims were. I am interested here in a particular zone, the sphere where the imaginative, or to put it another way, the fictional, and the 'historical' meet, which happens far more often in late antique texts than has perhaps been realised, and not simply in saints' lives or in the apocryphal narratives that fill in the gaps in more mainline Christian writing.

That said, the topic of fiction in saints' lives and apocryphal texts is huge. Among the more difficult questions to answer, for instance, is how an entirely fictional character like Thecla came to be regarded as a major saint, and the focus of a large and expanding pilgrim centre, some of whose traces can still

---

3 For dialogues as part of this literature see also Peter Tóth, ed., *"Apocryphization": Theological Debates in Biblical Disguise*, forthcoming.

4 See further Averil Cameron, *Christian Literature and Christian History*, Hans-Lietzmann-Vorlesung 2013 (Berlin: De Gruyter, in press).

be seen today in southern Turkey.<sup>5</sup> However, my theme here concerns the fictional debates that are often embedded in both kinds of work. One of the best known of these occurs when a soon-to-be martyr engages in a dialogue of *parresia* with the official or officials whose task it is to establish what should happen next, or with the crowd of bystanders whose literary role is to bear witness to the bravery and rightness of the martyr. This often involves a judicial setting and has been termed ‘the interrogation scene’, a feature which clearly adds to the drama and the performative nature of martyr-acts designed to be read aloud.<sup>6</sup> The nature and construction of these dialogues, however, deserve much fuller treatment. Among many examples, one might cite *Passio Anastasiae*, usually dated to the late fifth or early sixth century,<sup>7</sup> while in the Latin *Vita Heliae*, recently made available by Virginia Burrus and Marco Conti in the Oxford Early Christian Texts series and perhaps of the fifth century,<sup>8</sup> the heroine first debates with her mother about virginity versus marriage, then with a bishop, and finally with a judge. Recalling the example of Thecla, who disappeared into a rock, it is unclear whether Helia was actually martyred or not, and the text is full of fictional elements.

The role of the fictional in such texts remains to be explored. It is closely related to that of authorship, too big a subject to develop here.<sup>9</sup> Imaginary debates are widespread in homiletic writing, as a means of giving vividness to the homily, and these sometimes relate to the full-blown homiletic dialogues by Romanos or those in the so-called ‘dramatic homilies’.<sup>10</sup> But I shall focus

5 See Scott Fitzgerald Johnson, *The Life and Miracles of Thekla: A Literary Study* (Washington, DC: Center for Hellenic Studies, 2006).

6 ‘Interrogation scene’: Lucy Grig, *Making Martyrs in Late Antiquity* (London: Duckworth, 2004), 41; judicial setting and courtroom drama: *ibid.*, 59–61.

7 Though see Paola Francesca Moretti, ed., *La Passio Anastasiae. Introduzione, testo critico, traduzione* (Rome: Herder, 2006), 24–37, especially 33–37.

8 Virginia Burrus and Marco Conti, eds, *The Life of Saint Helia: Critical Edition, Translation, Introduction and Commentary*, OECT (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013).

9 A major theme is that of the relationship between ‘pseudonymous’ texts, texts attributed to well-known authors but probably not by them, and texts of similar type that can be securely attributed to known patristic authors.

10 Mary Cunningham, “Dramatic Device or Didactic Tool? The Function of Dialogue in Byzantine Preaching,” in *Rhetoric in Byzantium*, ed. Elizabeth Jeffreys, Papers from the Thirty-Fifth Spring Symposium of Byzantine Studies (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2003), 101–13. For Romanos’ dialogue poems relating to the Theotokos see Thomas Arentzen, “Virginity Recast: Romanos and the Mother of God” (PhD diss., University of Lund, 2014), and cf. also Jacob of Sarugh: Scott Fitzgerald Johnson, ed., *Jacob of Sarug’s Homily on the Sinful Woman* (Piscataway, N.J.: Gorgias Press, 2013). Satan and Hades are favourite interlocutors in such dialogue texts: see recently Ellen Muehlberger, “Negotiations with Death:

here on the inter-religious debates in prose, especially between Christians and Jews, that are found in several texts from Pauline's period and later, where authorship is a much murkier affair. Although they are often discussed with it, these debates do not all fit easily into the well-known genre or type of *Adversus Iudaeos* texts, which also flourished in the sixth and especially the seventh centuries and of which there are a number of Greek and Syriac examples,<sup>11</sup> but they do belong in the broader atmosphere of religious debate and literary dialogues that also flourished in that period.<sup>12</sup>

- 
- Ephrem's Control of Death in Dialogue," in *Shifting Cultural Frontiers in Late Antiquity*, ed. David Brakke, Deborah Deliyannis, and Edward Watts (Farnham: Ashgate, 2012), 23–34.
- 11 An excellent introduction is to be found in Sébastien Morlet, Olivier Munnich, and Bernard Pouderon, eds, *Les dialogues aduersus Iudaeos. Permanences et mutations d'une tradition polémique*, Actes du colloque international organisé les 7 et 8 décembre à l'Université de Paris-Sorbonne (Paris: Institut d'Études augustiniennes, 2013), especially the paper by Morlet, "Les dialogues *aduersus Iudaeos*: origine, caractéristiques, référentialité," 21–45 (though dealing only with works up to the early seventh century). A survey of the relevant works is given by Immacolata Aulisa and Claudio Schiano, eds, *Dialogo di Papisco e Filone guidei con un Monaco. Testo, traduzione e commento*, Quaderni di "Vetera Christianorum" 30 (Bari: Edipuglia, 2005), 17–86, but see the review by Patrick Andrist, *ByzZ* 101 (2008): 787–802, at 787–90; the *Dialogue of Papiscus and Philo with a Monk* has recently been reassessed under the heading Anon., *Dialogica Polymorpha Antiudaica* (CPG 7796), for which see the group of papers in Constantin Zuckerman, ed., *Constructing the Seventh Century = Travaux et Mémoires* 17 (2013): 9–172: Patrick Andrist, avec le concours de Vincent Déroche, "Questions ouverts autour des *Dialogica Polymorpha Antiudaica*," 9–26; Dmitry Afinogenov, Patrick Andrist, and Vincent Déroche, "La récession  $\gamma$  des *Dialogica Polymorpha Antiudaica* et sa version slavonne, *Disputatio in Hierosolymis sub Sophronio patriarcha*: une première approche," 27–104; Patrick Andrist, "Essai sur la famille  $\gamma$  des *Dialogica Polymorpha Antiudaica* et de ses sources: une composition d'époque iconoclaste?," 105–38; and Claudio Schiano, "Les *Dialogica Polymorpha Antiudaica* dans le Paris. Coisl. 193 et dans les manuscrits de la famille  $\beta$ ," 139–72. These papers sharply bring out the complexities of transmission and redaction in a wide group of anti-Jewish texts, and Vincent Déroche, "Forms and Functions of Anti-Jewish Polemics: Polymorphy, Polysemy," in *Jews in Byzantium. Dialectics of Minority and Majority Cultures*, ed. Robert Bonfil, Oded Irshai, Guy G. Stroumsa, and Rina Talgam (Leiden: Brill, 2012), 535–48, argues for the actual fluidity of the 'genre' as a whole. Perhaps it would also be better to avoid the loaded term 'polemic'. But thanks to recent pioneering work by Patrick Andrist, Vincent Déroche, and others, we are beginning to understand just how complex were the redactions and transmission of many of these works.
- 12 For which see Averil Cameron, *Dialoguing in Late Antiquity*, Hellenic Studies Series, vol. 65 (Cambridge, Mass. and Washington, D.C.: Center for Hellenic Studies, 2014), especially chapter 2 (also published in German as *Dialog und Debatte in der Spätantike*, Spielräume der Antike, Bd 3 [Stuttgart: Franz Steiner Verlag, 2014]).

A first example, albeit not an anti-Jewish dialogue, is the long debate in Greek on the subject of monothelism between Maximus Confessor and the deposed patriarch of Constantinople, Pyrrhus, which is set in Carthage in AD 645, on the eve of the rebellion of the exarch Gregory, and at a critical moment for the activity of Maximus which led to the Lateran Synod in Rome in 649, his subsequent arrest, trials, and death.<sup>13</sup> A lengthy public, or semi-public, debate in Greek in the capital of Byzantine North Africa would be a major event, and interesting in itself as a spectacular example of intellectual activity in Greek in what had before Belisarius' reconquest in the sixth century been a Latin-speaking province. By now it was home to a network of Greek-speaking monks and monasteries from Palestine, with Maximus playing an influential role among them, and a reconciliation between Pyrrhus, himself earlier a monk in Palestine, and Maximus, such as is envisaged at the end of this debate, fits with other evidence, including that of Maximus' letters.<sup>14</sup> By the time of the Lateran Synod Pyrrhus had reneged again, and it has been argued that the text of the debate was put together only later, in connection with the documentation prepared for Maximus' defence.<sup>15</sup> It may well be that the text was edited, 'improved', or extended at this later date, but just as with many other surviving texts which purport to record actual debates we have no way of knowing for sure either whether the debate happened as is claimed, or how reliably it has been recorded. I am inclined to think in this case that such a debate between Maximus and Pyrrhus did take place, even if the text as we have it may have been redacted later (as is entirely to be expected).<sup>16</sup>

- 
- 13 PG 91.288–353. For the dossier relating to Maximus' trials see Pauline Allen and Bronwen Neil, eds, *Maximus Confessor and his Companions. Documents from Exile*, ΟΕΣΤ (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), with their *Scripta Saeculi VII Vitam Maximi Confessoris Illustrantia*, CCG, vol. 39 (Brepols: Turnhout, 1999). The *acta* of the Lateran Synod are now available in English with discussion and notes in Richard Price with Phil Booth and Catherine Cubitt, trans., *The Acts of the Lateran Synod of 649*, TTH, vol. 61 (Liverpool: Liverpool Classical Press, 2014).
- 14 Christian Boudignon, "Le pouvoir de l'anathème, ou Maxime le Confesseur et les moines palestiniens du VII<sup>e</sup> siècle," in *Foundations of Power and Conflicts of Authority in Late Antique Monasticism*, ed. Alberto Camplani and Giovanni Filoramo, Proceedings of the International Seminar, Turin, December 2–4, 2004 (Leuven: Peeters, 2007), 254–74.
- 15 Jacques Noret, "La rédaction de la 'Disputatio cum Pyrrho' (CPG 7698) de saint Maxime le Confesseur: serait-elle postérieure à 655?," *AB* 117 (1999): 291–96.
- 16 A critical edition is needed; for German translation and notes see Guido Bausenhardt, "In allem uns gleich außer der Sünde": *Studien zum Beitrag Maximus' des Bekenners zur altkirchlichen Christologie*, mit einer kommentierten Übersetzung der 'Disputatio cum Pyrrho', *Tübinger Studien zur Theologie und Philosophie*, Bd 5 (Mainz: Matthias-Grünewald-Verlag, 1992), 196–316; unpublished text and French translation by M. Doucet, "Dispute de Maxime le Confesseur avec Pyrrhus, texte critique, introduction et notes"



The case of the *acta* of the Lateran Synod itself, even if Richard Price is right to react against the ultra-sceptical conclusions of their editor, Rudolf Riedinger,<sup>17</sup> shows how much might hang on texts such as these; however successful he was in achieving reconciliation with Pyrrhus in Carthage in 645, the circumstances surrounding the later processes against Maximus were highly fraught and required every possible effort by his supporters to prepare his case.

The surviving Greek text of the debate between them is one among numerous other examples of a debate text purporting to record an actual exchange, but whose accuracy as a record is difficult to assess, and the circumstances of whose composition remain mysterious. Sometimes such texts are ascribed to the well-known patristic authors who are the interlocutors, though the circumstances of their recording and final redaction are often quite uncertain. But while the actual genesis and composition of the text remain somewhat open questions, and even if substantial parts of it are the work of a later author, it is at least possible that a debate between Maximus and Pyrrhus in Carthage actually happened, in which case the text contrasts with other examples which are undoubtedly completely fictional.

Seemingly from the late sixth or early seventh century, for example, we have the very curious anonymous debate text in Greek set at the Sasanian court, generally referred to as *De gestis in Perside* (CPG 6968).<sup>18</sup> Here the debate supposedly arises from a dispute between pagans and Christians about the nature of pagan and Christian history. It claims to have arisen from a discussion as to the respective merits of 'Dionysarus' and the ecclesiastical historian Philip of Side, fragments of whose work seem to be contained in the text, placed in the mouth of a certain 'Aphroditian', in the story of Cassander and the so-called

---

(PhD diss., Université de Montréal, 1972); for these complex events see also Phil Booth, *Crisis of Empire. Doctrine and Dissent at the End of Antiquity*, TCH, vol. 52 (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2013), 285–87.

17 Riedinger argued that they were originally composed in Greek in the circle of Maximus, but see Price et al., *The Acts of the Lateran Synod*, 59–68.

18 Eduard Bratke, ed., *Das sogenannte Religionsgespräch am Hof der Sasaniden* (Leipzig: J.C. Hinrichs, 1899), and see Katharina Heyden, *Die "Erzählung des Aphroditian". Thema und Variationen einer Legende im Spannungsfeld von Christentum und Heidentum*, STAC, Bd 53 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2009). The work is the subject of a valuable dissertation by Pauline Bringel, "Une polémique religieuse à la cour perse: le *De gestis in Perside*. Histoire du texte, édition critique et traduction," 2 vols (PhD diss., Université de Paris-Sorbonne, 2007), on the basis of a new assessment of the rich manuscript tradition and the work's later reception, and identifying both short and long recensions. An English translation with brief notes by Andrew Eastbourne can be found online at [http://www.tertullian.org/fathers/anonymous\\_religionsgesprach.htm](http://www.tertullian.org/fathers/anonymous_religionsgesprach.htm), accessed 21.11.2014, with references to Bringel's 'long recension'.



'tale of Aphroditian'. The debate is summoned by the king ('Arrenatos'), who also supposedly summons a hundred bishops and archimandrites, and calls together the 'rabbis', whom he blames for the dispute, but allows them to choose who should adjudicate before sending them away. Their choice falls on Aphroditian, the king's 'chief cook' (in fact, high functionary), a pagan who lives only for philosophy; however, he encourages the bishops, saying that if they argue well, they will prevail. The text records a debate extending over four days, the first part between Aphroditian and the bishops; the Jews are brought in only at a late stage, whereupon their arguments are routed, and the work ends with the conversion of many of the Jews to Christianity. The work has been called a "historicizing romance,"<sup>19</sup> and fictional and fanciful it surely is, even while perhaps reflecting the interplay of religions in Sasanian court circles, and the religious patronage of both Chosroes I and Chosroes II. It expands on the trope familiar from anti-Jewish and apocalyptic texts of appealing to all peoples—Jews, Christians, Samaritans—by including an explicit reference to Buddhists. It is a Christian composition, as the writer makes clear, and as we can clearly see from the conversion of Jews with which it ends; the author says that he was included among the clergy summoned and that he is the only one to come from Roman territory. In another anti-Jewish trope, the Jews are said to have chosen Aphroditian, a pagan, as a trick, so that the Christians will be refuted, whereas in fact he is pro-Christian and turns the tables on them. After telling the story of Cassander he observes that Christ is superior to 'the Macedonian', in that He prevailed in apparent defeat and overcame his enemies. The pagan side of the argument does not get a hearing; as Bringel points out, the disagreement between pagans and Christians that was allegedly the starting point of the debate is not recorded, and in the first part only Aphroditian takes the floor. He complains that Christians are divided, and claims knowledge of the Hebrew scriptures, yet speaks from the standpoint of sympathy with Christianity.

His long 'tale', which also circulated separately, describes how the knowledge of Christ existed in Persia at the time of the magi, and recounts their subsequent story. Illogically, some of the archimandrites complain that he has favoured the Christians, and failed to do justice to the pagan position; but when the king orders them to be beheaded, Aphroditian keeps them safe in his own house. This scene is followed by a contest episode in which Oricatus, one of the magi, sets out to perform a series of wonders, including bringing

19 H. Cancik, "Antike Religionsgespräche," in *Medien religiöser Kommunikationen im imperium Romanum*, ed. C. Schörner and D. Erker Šterbenc, Potsdamer Altertumswissenschaftliche Beiträge, Bd 24 (Stuttgart: Steiner, 2008), 7.

Philip of Side up from the dead to declare that he did not write his *History*, and a trial by fire with one of the bishops, in which he is shown to be incapable, an outcome predicted by Aphroditian. The magus is ordered to be crucified by the king, and he too is saved by Aphroditian.

This is the point where the Jews ask to be allowed to take part in the debate, and the king now invites a certain Jacob and Pharas to debate with Aphroditian, in the presence of the bishops. An initial exchange during which Aphroditian cites a range of 'authorities' gives way to a dialogue between Aphroditian, the Jews, and the bishops. Jacob and Pharas are confounded, the king is pleased, and the other Jews now rise up and complain; they divide themselves into two groups. Aphroditian tells another story and is able to reconcile the two groups, at which Jacob and Pharas and sixty others are baptised, the others praising God and remaining as 'Christianomeritai', that is, perhaps, 'partial Christians', or perhaps 'Christianomeritai', 'dividers of Christians'.

The redactional history of the text is extremely difficult to establish. Is it a composite, with the anti-Jewish sections grafted on to earlier material (Aphroditian is said to be eighty years old at the time of the debate, and to have met Philip of Side himself)? Is the anti-Jewish section its main point? If so, why include the long earlier sections with the stories apparently from Philip of Side, and the following section about miracles? This hardly constitutes a refutation of paganism on a par with the Christian arguments against the Jews. Yet the work has an overall coherence in terms of structure, at least if one ignores the two final paragraphs, which do not seem to fit the rest. Clues to these problems can be found in its textual history, and, through a detailed study which is too complex to concern us here, Bringel identifies short and long recensions, the first lacking the anti-Jewish polemic; she also argues for a date at the end of the sixth or beginning of the seventh century. There are certainly many fanciful details, such as the fact that Aphroditian sits on a throne of gold and precious stones, or that Oricatus wears a necklace with three gorgon faces, or the inclusion of several pieces of pseudo-Persian in the text, complete with Greek translations.

On one level the work reflects the anti-Jewish material that inserts itself into so many Christian works,<sup>20</sup> and its anti-Jewish sections fit in some ways with the context of the *Adversus Iudaeos* texts of the late sixth and seventh

20 For anti-Jewish material pervading hagiographic texts see Immacolata Aulisa, *Giudei e cristiani nell'agiografia dell'alto medioevo*, Quaderni di "Vetera Christianorum" (Bari: Edipuglia, 2009).

centuries;<sup>21</sup> however, it is more complex, much wider in its scope and in some ways more imaginative and more fanciful than most others in the group. It also has a somewhat different agenda, namely to address the problem of religious divisions within as well as between individual faiths, a situation that Aphroditian several times deplures, whether among Christians or Jews, and one that he sets himself to change.

Passages of anti-Jewish dialogue could in fact insert themselves into numerous kinds of text, if the occasion presented itself. One such occasion indeed presented itself in the context of the numerous narratives of the finding of the True Cross, supposedly by the empress Helena, in the fourth century. In a recent contribution, Jan Willem Drijvers observes: “‘Dichtung und Wahrheit’, imaginative creation and fact, are not always easy to disentangle when dealing with Helena’s biography and the narrative about her discovery of the cross.”<sup>22</sup> He ends his paper by asserting that fact and fiction are ‘integral’, though not easily disentangled. One thing is clear however, as also in narratives about the Theotokos, namely that Jews will not be far away. In other words, in Christian late antiquity Jews were good to think with, and Christian writers lost no opportunity to make use of them.<sup>23</sup>

As Drijvers illustrates, the worlds of apocrypha and of anti-Jewish polemic often overlapped. Just as in the early seventh century the Persian conquest of Jerusalem, and especially the removal of the True Cross to Ctesiphon in 614, gave rise to a frenetic production of anti-Jewish writing, with the Jews cast as the agents of the Persians,<sup>24</sup> so the earlier legendary accounts of the finding of the cross quickly acquired a tendentious Jewish component. This is especially apparent in the Judas Ciriacus version, which according to Drijvers was probably first composed in Greek in Jerusalem between 415 and 440. In this account a Jew finds the three crosses for Helena, converts to Christianity and becomes

21 Thus it is included by Morlet, “Les dialogues *adversus Iudaeos*”, 45, as an *Adversus Iudaeos* text of the late sixth or early seventh century; it has material in common with *Dialogica polymorpha antijudaica* already mentioned (see Andrist, “Questions ouverts,” 14, and see also Vincent Déroche, “La polémique anti-judaïque au VI<sup>e</sup> et VII<sup>e</sup> siècle. Un memento inédit, les *Kephalaia*,” *Travaux et Mémoires* 11 [1991]: 277–78).

22 Jan Willem Drijvers, “Helena Augusta, the Cross and the Myth: Some New Reflections,” *Millenium* 8 (2011): 127.

23 See Aulisa, *Giudei e cristiani*; the tendency of anti-Jewish material to occur in so many different kinds of texts makes things difficult for those who are looking for ‘real’ engagement between Christians and Jews, still a prominent question in the abundant literature on the *Adversus Iudaeos* literature itself.

24 Averil Cameron, “Blaming the Jews: The Seventh-Century Invasion of Palestine in Context,” *Mélanges G. Dagron, Travaux et Mémoires* 14 (2002): 57–78.

the bishop of Jerusalem, after numerous elaborate and fictional details, including the summoning by Helena first of three thousand Jews, then a thousand, then five hundred of the particularly learned, and finally Judas.<sup>25</sup> A Syriac dialogue poem perhaps of the sixth or seventh century builds on this by dramatising the debate between Helena and the Jews in question.<sup>26</sup> Finally, Drijvers also draws attention to a set of apocryphal narratives about the dormition and assumption of Mary and known as the Six Books tradition, recently discussed by Stephen Shoemaker.<sup>27</sup> In the Syriac version from ca. 500, based on a Greek original, the governor of Jerusalem organises a debate between Christians and Jews, in which the Jews reveal the whereabouts of the cross, which is then buried by order of the governor, thus enabling it to be discovered later by Helena. This is not the place for further discussion of the highly complex set of texts relating to the story of the finding of the cross, except to emphasise that both debates and anti-Jewish features are elements that keep recurring.

However, a further example of a fictional debate, mentioned but not discussed in detail by Drijvers, is that in the *Acta Silvestri* (BHG 1628–35; BHL 7725–43), and it is worth dwelling on this dossier now in the light of the recent welcome study by Tessa Canella.<sup>28</sup> As is well known, the various versions of the *acta* blend a life of Sylvester, bishop of Rome, with a narrative in which Constantine's conversion and baptism have been transposed to Rome, and contain not only the claim that the emperor, until then a persecutor of

- 
- 25 Drijvers, "Helena Augusta," 151–52, and 160, n.151; idem, *Helena Augusta. The Mother of Constantine the Great and the Legend of the True Cross* (Leiden: Brill, 1992); Han J.W. Drijvers and Jan Willem Drijvers, eds, *The Finding of the True Cross: The Judas Kyriakos Legend in Syriac. Introduction, Text and Translation*, CSCO, vol. 565, Subsidia, vol. 93 (Leuven: Brepols, 1997).
- 26 Sebastian P. Brock, "Two Syriac Poems on the Invention of the Cross," in *Lebendige Überlieferung. Festschrift für H.-J. Vogt*, ed. N. el-Khoury, H. Crouzel, and R. Reinhardt (Beirut: Rückert/Ostfildern: Schwaben, 1992), 55–72 (reproduced in Brock, *From Ephrem to Romanos: Interactions between Syriac and Greek in Late Antiquity* [Aldershot: Ashgate, 1999], xi); and Drijvers, "Helena Augusta," 160–63.
- 27 Drijvers, "Helena Augusta," 153–58; Stephen J. Shoemaker, "A Peculiar Version of the *Inventio Crucis* in the Early Syriac Dormition Tradition," in *Studia Patristica*, vol. 41, ed. F. Young, M. Edwards, and P. Parvis, papers presented at the 14th International Conference on Patristic Studies, Oxford 2003 (Leuven: Peeters, 2006), 75–81; and idem, "Let us Go and Burn her Body': The Image of the Jews in the Early Dormition Tradition," *CH* 68 (1999): 801–802.
- 28 Tessa Canella, *Gli Actus Silvestri. Genesi di una leggenda su Costantino imperatore* (Spoleto: Fondazione Italiano di Studi sull'Alto Medioevo, 2006); discussion of the debate section at 179–260. I am most grateful to Tessa Canella, especially for her help in providing access to her book and to other material. For the *Acta* see also Aulisa, *Giudei e cristiani*, 172–77.

Christians, was converted after being cured of leprosy, but also a fictitious anti-Jewish dialogue, set in Rome in AD 315 in the Basilica Ulpia, which constitutes more than two-thirds of the whole. Helena has brought the most learned of the Jews to Rome from Jerusalem and the debate takes place in the presence of Constantine and Helena, with two supposedly impartial judges—a philosopher and teacher named Craton and an ex-prefect named Zenophilus—, neither of them Christian or Jewish, and many Jews, as well as the twelve interlocutors, and other bishops besides Sylvester. The dialogue is between bishop Sylvester and the twelve named Jewish leaders, who are variously named and described—scribes, rabbis, presbyters, synagogue leaders, and a magus, or magician. The topics covered in the first eleven of twelve episodes are many and varied: they include the Trinity, circumcision, the interpretation of scripture, the circumcision of Christ and Old Testament prophecy, the baptism of Christ, his eternal existence, his divine and human natures and his temptation, accusations from the Jews of misuse of scriptural *testimonia*, marriage, the two natures of Christ, and creation. The setting and circumstances of the debate are purely fictional, but the argumentation and the idea of a debate with Jews in the context of the reign of Constantine and with his mother Helena have resonances with a wide range of texts, not least accounts of the finding of the cross, and especially the Judas Ciriacus version,<sup>29</sup> while elements of the argumentation also link the *acta* to the more central *Adversus Iudaeos* tradition.<sup>30</sup> Canella connects the contest over miracles in the twelfth and final episode, which demonstrates the superiority of Sylvester, and demands comparison with *De gestis in Perside*, with the apocryphal *Acts of Peter*, which contain a debate between Peter and Simon Magus, in another indication of the fluidity between apocryphal and anti-Jewish material that we have noticed already.<sup>31</sup> Sylvester triumphs over Zambri, well known as a magus, in a bizarre episode in which Zambri kills a bull by magic, and Sylvester brings it back to life by the

29 The dramatic date in Constantine's reign is AD 315, too early for the emperor's actual baptism at Nicomedia, but historically correct for Constantine's presence in Rome.

30 Canella, *Gli Actus Silvestri*, 249, and 253–54.

31 For this episode, not included in the Latin texts provided by Canella, see Canella, *Gli Actus Silvestri*, 254–60 (though see also xx; Canella's appendix gives the text of three Latin versions of the debate, A, B, and the text edited by Mombricitus, for the purpose of comparing their differences; Mombricitus' text of the Zambri episode is reprinted by P. de Leo, *Ricerche sui falsi medioevali I. Il Constitutum Constantini. Compilazione agiografica del sec. VIII* [Reggio Calabria: Editori Meridionali Riuniti, 1924, 205–13]. Canella notes the role played by miracle in *De gestis in Perside* (which, on 254 and 263, she dates to the late fifth century) and in the debate between Herban and Gregentius included in the dossier of *Vita Gregentii* (which, on 263, she places in the early sixth century), on which see below.

power of the name of Christ.<sup>32</sup> Helena, Craton, Zenophilus and three thousand Jews are converted. Sylvester has already been applauded by the audience, and at the end of the debate all those present applaud again and give thanks to God, while the remaining Jewish interlocutor Seleon or Syleon declares himself satisfied and convinced by Sylvester's arguments.

The *acta* survive in some 300 Latin and 90 Greek manuscripts, and show a long history of adaptation and elaboration, the complexity of which makes reconstituting an 'original' version methodologically impossible.<sup>33</sup> Given the problems raised by their dissemination and textual history, Canella's study focuses on the relations between the existing recensions, their differences from each other and their parallels with other texts.

As for date, a version of the *acta* circulated in the West the late fifth or early sixth century, in time for them to be included in the works condemned in *Decretum Gelasianum*, but our earliest surviving text, in Latin from two Vatican manuscripts of the twelfth and ninth centuries and here labelled A, is dated by Canella to the mid-sixth century; this version of the debate is included in her appendix.<sup>34</sup> Pohlkamp sees the *acta* as originally emerging in a late fourth-century Roman or western context, while according to Vincenzo Aiello, who also places their genesis in the West, they belong in the aftermath of the sack of Rome in AD 410.<sup>35</sup> However, Canella plausibly connects the emergence of

32 A miracle also achieves the conversion of Jews in the fifth-century letter of Severus of Minorca (Scott Bradbury, ed., *Severus of Minorca: Letter on the Conversion of the Jews*, OECT [Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996]).

33 Fundamental work was done by W. Levison (though see Canella's reservations), and a critical edition of A<sub>1</sub> was projected by W. Pohlkamp; however, for the many problems in such an approach, and for possible ways forward, see Canella, *Gli Actus Silvestri*, xv–xix; the full content of a 'first' or 'original' version is impossible to reconstruct (xxii). Without the benefit of Canella's work on the *acta*, Albrecht Berger with G. Fiaccadori, ed., *Life and Works of Saint Gregentios, Archbishop of Taphar. Introduction, Critical Edition and Translation* (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2006), 112, commented that the text's anti-Jewish debate had made little impact on the *Adversus Iudaeos* literature, while Andreas Külzer, *Disputationes graecae contra Iudaeos. Untersuchungen zur byzantinischen antijüdischen Dialogliteratur und ihrem Judenbild*, *Byzantinisches Archiv*, Bd 18 (Stuttgart and Leipzig: B.G. Teubner, 1999), 181–82, has only a cursory mention.

34 Canella, *Gli Actus Silvestri*, xxiii, and 269–83.

35 W. Pohlkamp, "Textfassungen, literarische Formen und geschichtliche Funktionen der römischen Silvester-Akten," *Francia. Forschungen zur Westeuropäischen Geschichte* 19/1 (1992): 117–96; and Vincenzo Aiello, "Costantino, la lebbra e il battesimo di Silvestro," in *Costantino il Grande dall'antichità all'umanesimo. Colloquio sul cristianesimo nel mondo antico*, ed. Giorgio Bonamente and Franca Fusco, 2 vols (Macerata: Università degli studi di Macerata, 1990), 1. 17–58, on which see Canella, *Gli Actus Silvestri*, 45–46.

the text with the fifth-century East, and relates its subject matter to themes that had emerged in *Doctrina Addai*, where a king is also converted after an illness, and the Judas Ciriacus legend; the *Acta Silvestri* themselves were known in Syriac by AD 500 if not earlier.<sup>36</sup> A further early theme in the *acta* is that of anti-Arianism, manifested in Constantine's 'edited' orthodox baptism by Sylvester rather than his actual baptism by Eusebius of Nicomedia in the East.<sup>37</sup> In view of these similarities and possible relationships Canella argues for a more gradual evolution and for transmission from Greek to Latin. Versions of the *acta* fed into and were intimately related to a plethora of other texts also dealing with the 'history' of Constantine and including Constantine's vision of the apostles and the finding of the cross, together with strongly anti-Jewish arguments and themes. Even if not all the details can now be uncovered,<sup>38</sup> such a history points to the vast hinterland of fiction and imaginative elaboration that I have emphasised.

The final fictional debate to be considered belongs to a text equally strange and hard to place. This is the so-called *Dialexis*, part of a dossier in Greek concerning the kingdom of the Himyarites in south-west Arabia, recently edited by Albrecht Berger.<sup>39</sup> Here a very long debate takes place over several days between Gregentius, archbishop of Taphar (Zafar), the capital of Himyar, and a learned Jew called Herban, in the presence of the king, and the text enjoyed a wide circulation, with many known manuscripts.<sup>40</sup> There are numerous fanciful elements, for instance the presence of the 'senate' and of every possible learned man including learned Jews (scribes and Pharisees)

36 Drijvers, "Helena Augusta," 151 and 157. For these connections, and for the theme of the finding of the cross see Canella, *Gli Actus Silvestri*, 65–86.

37 In the Judas Ciriacus account the baptism is already transposed to Rome and Constantine's vision located on the Danube, but the bishop is Eusebius, not Sylvester.

38 See the discussion by Patrick Andrist, "Les *Objections des Hébreux*: un document de premier iconoclasme," *REB* 57 (1999): 116–19 and 121–22 on *Acta Silvestri* in particular; 112–14 on the *uitae* of Constantine; and 123 on the finding of the cross. On the highly complex relations between these texts, Andrist (106) suggests the useful concept of a "communauté de pensée et de manière de s'exprimer."

39 Berger, *Life and Works of Saint Gregentios*; the other texts in the dossier are *Vita Gregentii* (see below) and the so-called *Laws of the Himyarites*.

40 Excellent discussion of the argumentation and structure of *Dialexis* by Berger, *Life and Works of Gregentius*, 114–34; manuscripts: Patrick Andrist, "Pour un répertoire des manuscrits de polémique antijudaïque," *Byz* 70 (2000): 285. Many questions surround the text, including the form in which it circulated: see idem, "The Physiognomy of Greek *Contra Iudaeos* Manuscript Books in the Byzantine Era: A Preliminary Survey", in Bonfil et al., *Jews in Byzantium*, 569.



summoned from every city, and especially the appearance of Christ in a purple cloud after a challenge from Herban and in response to a lengthy prayer by Gregentius.<sup>41</sup> The Jews are struck blind, Gregentius promises that their sight will be restored if they accept baptism and baptises one as a proof, after which Herban and all the rest—five hundred thousand—are also baptised. The king (*basileus*) stands as Herban's sponsor, names him Leo and enrolls him in the senate, and Jews in cities everywhere are baptised. The king orders that the converted Jews be dispersed throughout the Christian communities in Himyar, and Gregentius asks him to make a law requiring them to marry their sons and daughters to Christians, thereby Christianising the land of Himyar. The debate ends with the happy Christianisation of Himyar under the blessed Gregentius and his royal patron, and with the death and burial of Gregentius himself at Zafar.

The whole dossier, including *Dialexis*, is obviously highly intriguing in relation to the historical Himyar, about which far more is now known than before thanks to the work done in recent years.<sup>42</sup> As for *Dialexis* itself, the debate is evidently set in the pre-Islamic period,<sup>43</sup> and makes no reference to Himyar's falling under Sasanian control in the later sixth century. It is tempting to connect Herban's complaint that the Jewish scriptures should never have been translated into "the elaborated language of the Greeks," thus allowing Christians to debate them,<sup>44</sup> with Justinian's well-known *Novel* 146 of AD 553.<sup>45</sup> Herban

41 Berger, *Life and Works of Gregentius*, 780–94.

42 The recent bibliography is large and growing: see Iwona Gazda, *Le royaume de Himyar à l'époque monothéiste* (Paris: De Boccard, 2009); Joëlle Beaucamp, Françoise Briquel-Chatonnet, and Christian Robin, eds, *Juifs et chrétiens en Arabie aux v<sup>e</sup> et vi<sup>e</sup> siècles: regards croisés sur les sources*, Collège de France-CNRS, Centre de recherche d'histoire et civilisation de Byzance, monographies, vol. 32, *Le massacre de Najran II* (Paris: Association des amis du Centre d'histoire et civilisation de Byzance, 2010); and Christian Robin, "The Peoples beyond the Arabian Frontier in Late Antiquity: Recent Epigraphic Discoveries and Latest Advances," in *Inside and Out. Interactions between Rome and the Peoples on the Arabian and Egyptian Frontiers in Late Antiquity*, ed. Jitse H.F. Dijkstra and Greg Fisher, *Late Antique History and Religion*, vol. 8 (Leuven: Peeters, 2014), 33–79.

43 Despite some touches that might point to a context in the early Islamic period, for example mention of the direction of prayer: Berger, *Life and Works of Gregentius*, 99–100.

44 *Ibid.*, 455.

45 For which see Patrick Andrist, "The Greek Bible Used by the Jews in the Dialogues Contra Iudaeos (Fourth–Tenth Centuries CE)," in *Jewish Reception of Greek Bible Versions. Studies in their Use and Reception in Late Antiquity and the Middle Ages*, ed. Nicholas de Lange, Julia G. Krivoruchko, and Cameron Boyd-Taylor, *TSMJ*, vol. 23 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2009), 239–40, with bibliography. I am also grateful to Nicholas de Lange for sharing with me his unpublished paper on this contested topic, "The Greek Bible in the Early Byzantine



is also said to have noticed notes being taken of the discussion by Palladius, Gregentius' *scholasticus*, whom he had brought from Alexandria; this recalls the mention of Gregentius' stay in Alexandria in the *uita*, unless it is simply a detail taken over from there.<sup>46</sup> Whether tendentiously or out of ignorance, the author of the *uita*, 'a hagiographical novel' according to its editor,<sup>47</sup> has also imposed an erroneously Chalcedonian colouring on the Himyarite setting.<sup>48</sup> In fact the relation of *Dialexis* to *Vita Gregentii* is far from simple. Earlier discussions have placed *Dialexis*, a work in a higher style of Greek, in the sixth century,<sup>49</sup> but its recent editor refers to allusions to the two wills of Christ and, following Vincent Déroche, probably to the Trullanum in the imperial palace in Constantinople, as well as to icon veneration and the procession of the Holy Spirit,<sup>50</sup> and argues that the mention of an Epiphanius in the *uita*, whom he identifies with the Epiphanius in the *uita* of Basil the Younger, proves that the *uita* emanates from Constantinople and points to the mid-tenth century.<sup>51</sup> He attributes both *Dialexis* and *Vita Gregentii* to the same author, and locates the origin of *Dialexis* in the same place and period as the *uita*.<sup>52</sup> Yet while the Jewish

---

Synagogue: Justinian's Novella 146 Reconsidered," delivered in Paris in July 2014, and for correcting my remarks at Averil Cameron, *Dialoguing in Late Antiquity*, 74.

46 Fiaccadori in Berger, *Life and Work of Gregentius*, 80.

47 *Ibid.*, 45.

48 Fiaccadori in *ibid.*, 81.

49 *Ibid.*, 108, "a mainly literary work." For the sixth century: Déroche, "La polémique anti-judaïque au VI<sup>e</sup> et VII<sup>e</sup> siècle", 277; Külzer, *Disputationes graecae*, 128–29 (but on this work see Johannes Niehoff-Panagiotidis, *ByzZ* 98 [2005]: 133–35); Irfan Shahid, "Byzantium in South Arabia," *DOP* 33 (1979): 32–33; for later dates proposed see Berger, *Life and Works of Gregentius*, 93 and 102–104. *Dialexis* is included among works of the sixth to seventh centuries by Aulisa and Schiano, *Dialogo di Papisco e Filone*, 50, but Andrist's 2008 review, (n. 11 above) 790, accepts Berger's dating to the tenth century.

50 These and other arguments indicating a later date: Berger, *Life and Works of Gregentius*, 94–97.

51 *Ibid.*, 40–41, cf. 43–45.

52 *Ibid.*, 106–109, ingeniously but probably over-imaginatively suggesting that the *uita* was an attempt to provide a more detailed, though fictitious, context for *Dialexis* (107, "the author must have searched the library of his monastery . . . for possible sources for the life of a fictitious Christian participant in the discussion"). *V.Greg.*, with a strong Roman agenda, was associated by Evelyne Patlagean, "Les moines grecs d'Italie et l'apologie des thèses pontificales," *Studi medievali* 5 (1964): 580, 583–86, and 594, with the Greek monasteries on the Aventine in Rome and placed in the mid-ninth century; it has also been dated to the sixth century. The text is complex, with cc. 1–8 (Gregentius' travels) and 9 (his mission in Himyar) deriving from an earlier Greek source ("an old source from the sixth century," according to Berger, *Life and Works of Gregentius*, 91).

history of the kingdom of Himyar in the period up to the Aksumite-Byzantine expedition of the 520s made it a particularly appropriate setting for an invented Christian-Jewish debate, it is hard to imagine serious knowledge of Himyar in Constantinople in the tenth century, and one can surely imagine a tenth-century dating only on the assumption of the development of earlier material, as indeed Berger allows in the case of the *uita*. The conversion of Jews appears here as in the other debates as a rhetorical trope; it is tempting, but actually very difficult, to associate it with any recorded results of the efforts to order forced baptism of Jews by Heraclius, Leo I, and Basil I.<sup>53</sup>

Whether or not the debate in fact belongs to Constantinople in the tenth century,<sup>54</sup> *Dialexis* imagines an elaborately fictionalised scenario that is in its general outlines not unlike the other debates we have been discussing. At the same time it clearly belongs in the tradition of other *Adversus Iudaeos* texts, and shares themes and argumentation with them.<sup>55</sup> Though much has been published in the past on this body of material it also constitutes a lively field in current scholarship, with a wealth of new publications and revisions of earlier positions; some judgements have to be suspended pending further studies. At the same time, however, *Dialexis* and the dossier to which it belongs demonstrate the wider fictional and imaginative elements that we have seen in *De gestis in Perside* and *Acta Silvestri*. With the exception of the debate between Maximus and Pyrrhus, the texts I have discussed all demonstrate in their different ways the existence of a floating mass of themes and arguments, often put together with other material, for which it is probably misleading to think of an 'original' or certainly a final version.<sup>56</sup> That said, they also certainly belong in the realm of fiction, the topic from which I began.

It used to be the case that saints' lives were regarded as inherently less important or more 'popular' than 'higher' types of Christian writing. Such attitudes have long been shown to be misguided. But there are other types of Christian writing, like these fictional debates, that also need to be brought more fully into view, and integrated into our wider conceptions of the Christian imagination in late antiquity. This chapter makes no claim to originality and has done

53 For these and for the problems surrounding their interpretation see Robert Bonfil, "Continuity and Discontinuity (641–1204)," in Bonfil et al., *Jews in Byzantium*, 65–100.

54 Canella, *Gli Actus Silvestri*, 263 (published in the same year as Berger's study) places it in the early sixth century.

55 Berger, *Life and Works of Gregentius*, 115–18.

56 Thus *Dialogica polymorpha antiudaica* are "un ensemble" rather than a single text; for their floating relations with other texts see Andrist, "Questions ouverts," 14–15, and for the attribution of specific versions to well-known names, 24–25.

no more than draw attention to this type of material. I am especially grateful and indebted to recent work by several specialist scholars who have helped to illuminate these difficult texts. But I hope that these and other examples will encourage others to pay more sympathetic attention to the contribution of fiction and imagination to the Christian literature of late antiquity.

### Bibliography

- De gestis in Perside* (Eduard Bratke, ed. *Das sogenannte Religionsgespräch am Hof der Sasaniden*. Leipzig: J.C. Hinrichs, 1899).
- Gregentius. *Opera* (Albrecht Berger, ed. *Life and Works of Saint Gregentios, Archbishop of Taphar, Introduction, Critical edition and translation, with a contribution by G. Fiaccadori*. Berlin: De Gruyter, 2006).
- Jacob of Sarugh. *Homily on the Sinful Woman* (Scott Fitzgerald Johnson, ed. *Jacob of Sarug's Homily on the Sinful Woman*. Piscataway, N.J.: Gorgias Press, 2013).
- Judas Kyriakos Legend* (Han J.W. Drijvers and Jan Willem Drijvers, eds. *The Finding of the True Cross: The Judas Kyriakos Legend in Syriac. Introduction, Text and Translation*, CSCO vol. 565, Subsidia 93. Leuven: Brepols, 1997).
- Passio Anastasiae* (Paola Francesca Moretti, ed. *La Passio Anastasiae. Introduzione, testo critico, traduzione*. Rome: Herder, 2006).
- Severus of Minorca. *Epistula* (Scott Bradbury, ed. *Severus of Minorca, Letter on the Conversion of the Jews*, OECT. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996).
- Synod of the Lateran (649) (Rudolf Riedinger, ed., *ACO. series secunda, vol. 1: concilium Lateranense a. 649 celebratum*. Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1984. English translation in Richard Price, with Phil Booth and Catherine Cubitt, trans., *The Acts of the Lateran Synod of 649*, TTH, vol. 61. Liverpool: Liverpool Classical Press, 2011).
- Vita Heliae* (Virginia Burrus and Marco Conti, eds. *The Life of Saint Helia: Critical Edition, Translation, Introduction and Commentary*, OECT. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013).
- Afinogenov, Dmitry, Patrick Andrist, and Vincent Déroche, "La récénsion des *Dialogica Polymorpha Antiudaica* et sa version slavonne: *Disputatio in Hierosolymis sub Sophronio patriarcha*: une première approche." *Travaux et Mémoires* 17 (2013): 27–104.
- Aiello, Vincenzo. "Costantino, la lebbra e il battesimo di Silvestro." in *Costantino il Grande dall'antichità all'umanesimo. Colloquio sul cristianesimo nel mondo antico*, edited by Giorgio Bonamente and Franca Fusco, 2 vols, 1.17–58. Macerata: Università degli studi di Macerata, 1990.
- Allen, Pauline. *Evagrius Scholasticus the Church Historian*, Études et documents, vol. 41. Leuven: Spicilegium Sacrum Lovaniense, 1981.

- Allen, Pauline, and Bronwen Neil, eds. *Scripta Saeculi VII Vitam Maximi Confessoris Illustrantia*, CCG, vol. 39. Brepols: Turnhout, 1999.
- , eds. *Maximus Confessor and his Companions: Documents from Exile*, OECT. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002.
- Andrist, Patrick. "Les *Objections des Hébreux*: un document de premier iconoclisme." *REB* 57 (1999): 99–140.
- . "Pour un répertoire des manuscrits de polémique antijudaïque." *Byz* 70 (2000): 270–306.
- . "The Greek Bible Used by the Jews in the Dialogues *Contra Iudaeos* (Fourth–Tenth Centuries CE)." In *Jewish Reception of Greek Bible Versions. Studies in their Use and Reception in Late Antiquity and the Middle Ages*, edited by Nicholas de Lange, Julia G. Krivoruchko and Cameron Boyd-Taylor, TSMJ, vol. 23, 235–62. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2009.
- . "The Physiognomy of Greek *Contra Iudaeos* Manuscript Books in the Byzantine Era: A Preliminary Survey." In *Jews in Byzantium, Dialectics of Minority and Majority Cultures*, edited by Robert Bonfil, Oded Irshai, Guy G. Stroumsa and Rina Talgam, 549–85. Leiden: Brill, 2012.
- , avec le concours de Vincent Déroche, "Questions ouverts autour des *Dialogica Polymorpha Antiudaica*." *Travaux et Mémoires* 17 (2013): 9–26.
- . "Essai sur la famille  $\gamma$  des *Dialogica Polymorpha Antiudaica* et de ses sources: une composition d'époque iconoclaste?" *Travaux et Mémoires* 17 (2013): 105–38.
- Arentzen, Thomas. "Virginity Recast. Romanos and the Mother of God." PhD diss. University of Lund, 2014.
- Aulisa, Immacolata, and Claudio Schiano, eds. *Dialogo di Papisco e Filone guidei con un Monaco. Testo, traduzione e commento*, Quaderni di "Vetera Christianorum" vol. 30. Bari: Edipuglia, 2005.
- Beaucamp, Joëlle, Françoise Briquel-Chatonnet, and Christian Robin, eds. *Juifs et chrétiens en Arabie aux V<sup>e</sup> et VI<sup>e</sup> siècles: regards croisés sur les sources*, Collège de France-CNRS, Centre de recherche d'histoire et civilisation de Byzance, monographies 32, *Le massacre de Najran* II. Paris: Association des amis du Centre d'histoire et civilisation de Byzance, 2010.
- Bausenhart, Guido. "*In allem uns gleich außer der Sünde*": Studien zum Beitrag *Maximos' des Bekenners zur altkirchlichen Christologie*, mit einer kommentierten Übersetzung der "Disputatio cum Pyrrho", Tübinger Studien zur Theologie und Philosophie, Bd 5. Mainz: Matthias-Grünwald-Verlag, 1992.
- Bonfil, Robert. "Continuity and Discontinuity (641–1204)." In *Jews in Byzantium, Dialectics of Minority and Majority Cultures*, edited by Robert Bonfil, Oded Irshai, Guy G. Stroumsa, and Rina Talgam, 65–100. Leiden: Brill, 2012.
- Booth, Phil. *Crisis of Empire. Doctrine and Dissent at the End of Antiquity*, TCH, vol. 52. Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2013.

- Boudignon, Christian. "Le pouvoir de l'anathème, ou Maxime le Confesseur et les moines palestiniens du VII<sup>e</sup> siècle." In *Foundations of Power and Conflicts of Authority in Late Antique Monasticism*, edited by Alberto Camplani and Giovanni Filoramo, Proceedings of the International Seminar, Turin, December 2–4, 2004, 254–74. Leuven: Peeters, 2007.
- Bringel, Pauline. "Une polémique religieuse à la cour perse: le De gestis in Perside. Histoire du texte, édition critique et traduction," 2 vols. PhD diss. Université de Paris-Sorbonne, 2007.
- Brock, Sebastian P. "Two Syriac Poems on the Invention of the Cross." In *Lebendige Überlieferung. Festschrift für H.-J. Vogt*, edited by N. el-Khoury, H. Crouzel, and R. Reinhardt, 55–72. Beirut: Rückert/Ostfildern: Schwaben, 1992 (reproduced in Sebastian Brock. *From Ephrem to Romanos. Interactions between Syriac and Greek in Late Antiquity*, XI. Aldershot: Ashgate, 1999).
- Cameron, Averil. "Blaming the Jews: The Seventh-Century Invasion of Palestine in Context." *Mélanges G. Dagron, Travaux et Mémoires* 14 (2002): 57–78.
- . *Dialoguing in Late Antiquity*, Hellenic Studies Series, vol. 65. Washington, D.C.: Center for Hellenic Studies, 2014 (in German as Averil Cameron. *Dialog und Debatte in der Spätantike*, Spielräume der Antike, Bd 3. Stuttgart: Franz Steiner Verlag, 2014).
- . *Christian Literature and Christian History*, Hans-Lietzmann-Vorlesung 2013. Berlin: De Gruyter, in press.
- Cancik, H. "Antike Religionsgespräche." In *Medien religiöser Kommunikationen im imperium Romanum*, edited by C. Schörner and D. Erker Šterbenc, Potsdamer Altertumswissenschaftliche Beiträge, Bd 24, 15–25. Stuttgart: Steiner, 2008.
- Canella, Tessa. *Gli Actus Silvestri. Genesi di una leggenda su Costantino imperatore*. Spoleto: Fondazione Italiano di Studi sull'Alto Medioevo, 2006.
- Cunningham, Mary. "Dramatic Device or Didactic Tool? The Function of Dialogue in Byzantine Preaching." In *Rhetoric in Byzantium*, edited by Elizabeth Jeffreys, Papers from the Thirty-Fifth Spring Symposium of Byzantine Studies, 101–13. Aldershot: Ashgate, 2003.
- Déroche, Vincent. "La polémique anti-judaïque au VI<sup>e</sup> et VII<sup>e</sup> siècle. Un memento inédit, les *Kephalaia*." *Travaux et Mémoires* 11 (1991): 275–311.
- . "Forms and Functions of Anti-Jewish Polemics: Polymorphy, Polysemy." In *Jews in Byzantium, Dialectics of Minority and Majority Cultures*, edited by Robert Bonfil, Oded Irshai, Guy G. Stroumsa, and Rina Talgam, 535–48. Leiden: Brill, 2012.
- Doucet, M. "Dispute de Maxime le Confesseur avec Pyrrhus, texte critique, introduction et notes." PhD diss., Université de Montréal, 1972.
- Drijvers, Jan Willem. *Helena Augusta: The Mother of Constantine the Great and the Legend of the True Cross*. Leiden: Brill, 1992.

- . “Helena Augusta, the cross and the myth: some new reflections.” *Millenium* 8 (2011): 125–74.
- Gazda, Iwona, *Le royaume de Himyar à l'époque monothéiste*. Paris: De Boccard, 2009.
- Grig, Lucy. *Making Martyrs in Late Antiquity*. London: Duckworth, 2004.
- Hock, Ronald F., J. Bradley Chance, and Judith Perkins, eds. *Ancient Fiction and Early Christian Narrative*. Atlanta, Ga: Scholars Press, 1998.
- Johnson, Scott Fitzgerald. *The Life and Miracles of Thekla: A Literary Study*. Cambridge, Mass.: Center for Hellenic Studies, 2006.
- Karla, Grammatiki A., ed. *Fiction on the Fringe. Novelistic Writing in the Post-Classical Age*, Mnemosyne Supplements. Monographs on Greek and Roman Language and Literature, vol. 310. Leiden: Brill, 2009.
- Külzer, Andreas, *Disputationes graecae contra Iudaeos. Untersuchungen zur byzantinischen antijüdischen Dialogliteratur und ihrem Judenbild*, Byzantinisches Archiv, Bd 18. Stuttgart and Leipzig: B.G. Teubner, 1999.
- Morlet, Sébastien. “Les dialogues *aduersus Iudaeos*: origine, caractéristiques, référentialité.” In Sébastien Morlet, Olivier Munnich, and Bernard Pouderon, eds. *Les dialogues aduersus Iudaeos. Permanences et mutations d'une tradition polémique*, Actes du colloque international organisé les 7 et 8 décembre à l'Université de Paris-Sorbonne, 21–45. Paris: Institut d'Études augustinienes, 2013.
- Muehlberger, Ellen. “Negotiations with Death: Ephrem's Control of Death in Dialogue.” In *Shifting Cultural Frontiers in Late Antiquity*, edited by David Brakke, Deborah Deliyannis, and Edward Watts, 23–34. Farnham: Ashgate, 2012.
- Noret, Jacques. “La rédaction de la ‘*Disputatio cum Pyrrho*’ (CPG 7698) de saint Maxime le Confesseur: serait-elle postérieure à 655?” *AB* 117 (1999): 291–96.
- Patlagean, Evelyne. “Les moines grecs d'Italie et l'apologie des thèses pontificales.” *Studi medievali* 5 (1964): 579–602.
- Pohlkamp, W. “Textfassungen, literarische Formen und geschichtliche Funktionen der römischen Silvester-Akten.” *Francia. Forschungen zur Westeuropäischen Geschichte* 19/1 (1992): 117–96.
- Rebenich, G.H. “Hagiographic Fiction as Entertainment.” In *Latin Fiction: The Latin Novel in Context*, edited by Heinz Hofmann, 187–212. London and New York: Routledge, 1999.
- Robin, Christian J. “The Peoples beyond the Arabian Frontier in Late Antiquity: Recent Epigraphic Discoveries and Latest Advances.” In *Inside and Out. Interactions between Rome and the Peoples on the Arabian and Egyptian Frontiers in Late Antiquity*, edited by Jitse H.F. Dijkstra and Greg Fisher, *Late Antique History and Religion*, vol. 8, 33–79. Leuven: Peeters, 2014.
- Schiano, Claudio. “Les *Dialogica Polymorpha Antiudaica* dans le Paris. Coisl. 193 et dans les manuscrits de la famille β.” *Travaux et Mémoires* 17 (2013): 139–72.

Shahid, Irfan. "Byzantium in South Arabia." *DOP* 33 (1979): 23–94.

Shoemaker, Stephen J. "Let Us Go and Burn Her Body: The Image of the Jews in the Early Dormition Tradition." *CH* 68 (1999): 775–823.

———. "A Peculiar Version of the *Inventio Crucis* in the Early Syriac Dormition Tradition." *Studia Patristica*, vol. 41, ed. F. Young, M. Edwards, and P. Parvis, papers presented at the 14th International Conference on Patristic Studies, Oxford 2003, 75–81. Leuven: Peeters, 2006.

Tóth, Peter, ed. *"Apocryphization": Theological Debates in Biblical Disguise*. Forthcoming.

**PART 5**

*Reading the Past, Shaping the Present*







## The Personal Identity of Jesus Christ: Alois Grillmeier's Original Contribution to its Conceptualisation

*Michael Slusser*

When Christians have talked or written about Jesus Christ, they have always been referring to the same figure whose dramatic portrait is presented in the four gospels.<sup>1</sup> In that sense—Jesus Christ as the referent for speech about him—his personal identity is simple and straightforward. Dig deeper, however, as Christians have done, and his identity is complex and difficult to define. Christians have argued over the proper way to conceive of him, how to interpret the scriptural texts that refer to him, and how to understand his words and deeds. As today we read the arguments from early Christianity, we struggle to understand what was going on, what was at stake, and who exactly they thought Jesus was. Inevitably, scholars have grouped similar views together, sometimes by geography, sometimes in terms of ecclesiastical politics, and sometimes genealogically, tracing lines of influence from one writer to another.

In describing the christological disputes of the late fourth century and beyond, it became commonplace to write of 'Antiochene' and 'Alexandrian' ways of understanding the Jesus of whom scripture speaks. This classification became associated with another way of sorting out early Christian theology, namely, that between an alleged Alexandrian fondness for allegorical exegesis of scripture and an Antiochene preference for a more sober and literal exegesis. Scholars wrote of a school of Alexandria and a school of Antioch, taking their cue, perhaps, from the mentions of a catechetical school in Alexandria, whatever form it took,<sup>2</sup> and a more shadowy 'academy' in Antioch under the presbyter Lucian.<sup>3</sup> That classification became commonplace in discussion

---

1 Even those who asserted a spiritual Christ from above and a psychic Jesus from below sought to disclose the true meaning behind the figure in the gospels.

2 Annewies van den Hoek, "The 'Catechetical' School of Early Christian Alexandria and its Philonic Heritage," *HTR* 90 (1997): 59–87.

3 Benjamin Drewery, "Antiochien II. Die Bedeutung Antiochiens in der alten Kirche," *TRE* 3 (1978): 106.

of the history of christology and was used in classic textbooks.<sup>4</sup> Perhaps the fullest development of its possibilities was produced by R.V. Sellers in his *Two Ancient Christologies* in 1940.<sup>5</sup>

A decade later, the late Alois Grillmeier, S.J., changed the terms of the whole discussion when, with Heinrich Bacht, he co-edited *Das Konzil von Chalkedon*, a symposium in three volumes commemorating the 1500th anniversary of the Council of Chalcedon in 451.<sup>6</sup> The symposium was quickly noticed. When Kurt Aland revised Loofs' *Leitfaden*, his updated bibliographical appendix described *Das Konzil* as a "[g]rundlegendes Sammelwerk."<sup>7</sup> R.V. Sellers prefaced his own new book on Chalcedon by saying, "Unfortunately, I have not been able to make use of the important symposium, *Das Konzil von Chalkedon* . . . My own contribution, which must appear meagre beside this massive collection, was already in the hands of the printer when the first volume of this work made its appearance."<sup>8</sup> It was the first volume that must have occasioned Sellers' regret, for it contained Grillmeier's lengthy historical account of the development of christological doctrine, "Die theologische und sprachliche Vorbereitung der christologischen Formel von Chalkedon."<sup>9</sup> That book-length contribution by Grillmeier grew, in successive editions and translations, to be a standard resource for students of the history of christology.<sup>10</sup>

---

4 E.g., Friedrich Loofs' perennial textbook, *Leitfaden zum Studium der Dogmengeschichte*, which went through seven editions between 1889 and 1968.

5 R.V. Sellers, *Two Ancient Christologies: A Study in the Christological Thought of the Schools of Alexandria and Antioch in the Early History of Christian Doctrine* (London: SPCK, 1940).

6 Aloys Grillmeier and Heinrich Bacht, eds, *Das Konzil von Chalkedon. Geschichte und Gegenwart*, 3 vols (Würzburg: Echter-Verlag, 1951–1954). The set was republished with corrections in 1959 and 1963. The spelling 'Aloys' of Grillmeier's first name was used in this book and its later developments, but I shall use the more common spelling 'Alois' in this chapter.

7 Friedrich Loofs, *Leitfaden zum Studium der Dogmengeschichte*, rev. Kurt Aland, 7th ed. (Tübingen: Max Niemeyer Verlag, 1968), 586.

8 R.V. Sellers, *The Council of Chalcedon: A Historical and Doctrinal Survey* (London: SPCK, 1961), ix. This book was first published in 1953, and the preface quoted here bears the date of June, 1952.

9 Grillmeier and Bacht, *Das Konzil von Chalkedon*, 1.5–202.

10 See Aloys Grillmeier, *Christ in Christian Tradition*, vol. 2: *From the Council of Chalcedon (451) to Gregory the Great (590–604)*, part 1: *Reception and Contradiction. The Development of the Discussion about Chalcedon from 451 to the Beginning of the Reign of Justinian*, trans. Pauline Allen and John Cawte (Atlanta, Ga: John Knox Press, 1987); and Aloys Grillmeier, with Theresia Hainthaler, *Christ in Christian Tradition*, vol. 2: *From the Council of Chalcedon (451) to Gregory the Great (590–604)*, part 2: *The Church of Constantinople in*

In 1986, on the only occasion on which I got the chance to speak with Grillmeier about his work, I asked him how he had come to classify patristic christologies into ‘Word/Flesh’ and ‘Word/Man’ types—the classification that, in the decades following the publication of the first volume of *Das Konzil von Chalkedon*, had affected most scholarly discussion of how the fathers articulated the identity of Jesus Christ. Had he found that classification in earlier scholarship, I asked Professor Grillmeier, or was it original? The latter, Professor Grillmeier said, and he told me how he had arrived at the idea. It is my purpose here to tell the story of his classification, its success, and how he arrived at it.

The key to Grillmeier’s new classification, he told me, was to be found in research he did after World War II into the patristic understanding of Christ’s descent into hell. Grillmeier published the results in an article that appeared in 1949, “Der Gottessohn im Totenreich,”<sup>11</sup> where he studied the way in which Christ’s descent into hell started out as a soteriological matter and later became a christological one: the account of how Jesus Christ overcame death, sin, and the devil became a key to understanding how the identity of the incarnate Word is structured. Framing the issue were the Roman creed, with its assertion, “He descended into hell,” and the pivotal scripture text, 1 Peter 3:18–19: “For Christ also died for sins once for all, the righteous for the unrighteous, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh but made alive in the spirit; in which he went and preached to the spirits in prison.” (RSV). Grillmeier remarked:

In a soteriological or salvation-history approach, the descent of Christ is viewed only in terms of our salvation, as Christ’s victory over death, the devil and the entire netherworld. This point of view dominated the field in the first Christian centuries. The christological issue in the restricted sense brought a new point of view to the approach to the descent of Christ, namely, reflection on the being of the God-man. This revealed itself in a special way in the three days in the tomb. It was almost as if Christ’s inner

---

*the Sixth Century*, trans. Pauline Allen and John Cawte (Louisville, Ky: Westminster John Knox Press, 1995).

11 Alois Grillmeier, “Der Gottessohn im Totenreich. Soteriologische und christologische Motivierung der Descensuslehre in der älteren christlichen Überlieferung,” *ZKTh* 71 (1949): 1–53 and 184–203. A revised version of this article appeared in Alois Grillmeier, *Mit ihm und in ihm* (Freiburg: Herder, 1975), 76–174 (many of the revisions are simply expansions of abbreviations or additions to the notes and bibliography).

structure was open to view. Thus, especially in the late fourth and early fifth centuries, a special “descent christology” developed.<sup>12</sup>

It was during this later phase of development that the theme of the descent into hell provided the occasion for the discussion of christological issues. A big question concerns how, in reading 1 Peter 3:19, one takes the ‘spirit’ of Christ, “in which he went and preached to the spirits in prison.” If one reads it as referring to his divinity itself, as it here stands in contrast with his flesh (“put to death in the flesh but made alive in the spirit”), one approaches the soteriological point of view common among the earlier fathers, who found it religiously most satisfying to show the direct confrontation between God’s own Word and the powers opposed to it, who held the spirits of the just captive in the underworld. But a second viewpoint, still soteriological, takes its sense of the ‘spirit’ from Luke 23:46, where Jesus commits his spirit to his Father. In this interpretation, one is led to view the ‘spirit’ in 1 Peter 3:19 as the human soul of Jesus. This interpretation of ‘spirit’ as soul resembles the view of those later fathers who saw the visit to the underworld as a disclosure of Christ’s human soul.<sup>13</sup>

Both views, thought Grillmeier, have their problems: to see the ‘spirit’ as Christ’s divinity accords well with the phrase “made alive in the spirit,” but it is hard (if not impossible) to see divinity as moving locally to the underworld. On the other hand, while it makes sense to have ‘spirit’ mean ‘soul’ in the case of Christ, since it is indeed the souls of the just to whom we would expect him to be preaching “in prison,” what then could “made alive in the spirit” mean, since the spirit seems to be the power which raises him up? How would his soul be seen as acting upon itself to make itself live? Looking at these two alternative interpretations and the uncomfortable choice which they present, Grillmeier concluded:

---

12 Grillmeier, “Der Gottessohn,” 2 (= *Mit ihm*, 77–78): “Die soteriologische oder heilsgeschichtliche Betrachtungsweise sieht den Abstieg Christi nur unter der Rücksicht unseres Heils, als Sieg Christi über den Tod, den Teufel und die Unterwelt im Ganzen. Sie beherrscht in den ersten christlichen Jahrhunderten das Feld. Die christologische Fragestellung im engeren Sinn brachte nun einen neuen Gesichtspunkt in der Betrachtung des Abstiegs Christi, nämlich die Besinnung auf das Wesen des Gottmenschen. Dieses offenbarte sich in besonderer Weise im *triduum mortis*. Da ließ Christus gleichsam in sein inneres Gefüge hineinschauen. So entwickelt sich denn besonders im 4. und beginnenden 5. Jahrhundert eine eigene *Abstiegschristologie*.” Unless otherwise noted, translations in this chapter are my own.

13 Grillmeier, “Der Gottessohn,” 24–25: “Nach der größeren Zahl der Ausleger zu urteilen, scheint die Wahl nur zwischen zwei Möglichkeiten zu schwanken. Entweder wird *pneuma* von der Gottheit Christi oder von seiner Seele verstanden.”

that this dilemma is flawed and a third explanation must be sought. The division, either Christ's divinity or Christ's soul, if it is taken as exhaustive, will simply not do justice to the passage from 1 Peter. The easiest solution, even if not necessarily the only one, is to take *pneuma* not as the divinity of Christ in the strict sense but as God's spirit or God's power in a less definite sense.<sup>14</sup>

In this variant, 'spirit' would refer to the Holy Spirit, the power of God that raised Christ from the dead. It is also fair to say that, while it may appear more or less neutral with regard to the two possibilities for interpreting the word *pneuma* in 1 Peter 3:19, it really inclines toward the view that it was the soul of Jesus, rather than the Logos, which descended to preach to the spirits of the just.

The interpretations just described corresponded roughly to two chronological periods. The earlier view was that of the "descent of the Logos,"<sup>15</sup> which prevailed largely till the fourth century, with the exceptions of Tertullian and Origen.<sup>16</sup> Grillmeier follows it forward, via the Paschal Homily of pseudo-Hippolytus and the *Sermo de anima et corpore* once attributed eventually to Alexander of Alexandria himself as well as his opponent Arius. The descent of the Logos was a common element in their theology. Several other fourth-century church writers, such as Athanasius of Alexandria, Eusebius of Caesarea, Hilary of Poitiers, Ambrosiaster, and Ambrose, continued to hold that in the death of Christ the Logos separated from the flesh and descended to

---

14 Grillmeier, "Der Gottessohn," 26–27 (*Mit ihm*, 105): "daß dieses Dilemma nicht richtig ist und eine dritte Auslegung gesucht werden muß. Der Gegensatz: Gottheit Christi—Seele Christi, wird, in solcher Ausschließlichkeit genommen, wohl zu Unrecht an die Petrusstelle herangetragen. Der leichteste Ausweg, wenn auch nicht notwendig der einzige, ist wohl, *pneuma* nicht als Gottheit 'Christi' im strengen Sinn zu nehmen, sondern als Gottes Geist, oder Gottes Kraft in einem unbestimmteren Sinn."

15 Grillmeier, "Der Gottessohn," 29–53 (*Mit ihm*, 108–42), where he speaks of "Die klassische Zeit des Theologumenons vom 'Logosabstieg'."

16 Grillmeier, "Der Gottessohn," 31 (*Mit ihm*, 110): "Christus stirbt also nicht, weil er seinen *Spiritus* . . . das heißt seine Gottheit, die Tertullian häufig entsprechend dem griechischen *Pneuma* mit *Spiritus* bezeichnet, aufgibt, sondern seinen *spiritus* . . . das heißt seine Seele, in die Hände des Vaters übergibt. Es wird—abgesehen von Origenes—lange dauern, bis wir solch einer Erklärung des Sterbens Christi wieder begegnen, obwohl sie auch bei Tertullian noch nicht klar und unmißverständlich ist, besonders ob des geistreichen Wortspiels von *Spiritus* (Gottheit) und *spiritus* (Seele)."

the realm of the dead.<sup>17</sup> The great difference between Arius and his opponents, according to Grillmeier, lay in Arius' concern to use this intimate connection between Logos and flesh to underline the created and mutable nature of the Logos.<sup>18</sup> After the rejection of Arius' views, perhaps this approach to the question would have continued had there not been the rise of yet a third version of the theology of the descent of the Logos, that of the Apollinarians, who ended up, thought Grillmeier, denying Christ an ordinary human death involving separation of soul and body.<sup>19</sup> One common element in all the authors of this type (and there are several of them) is their assumption that the soul plays the key intermediary role in the unity of the Word of God and humanity in Jesus Christ; the body, the flesh in a narrow sense, was not seen as capable of being immediately united to the Word.<sup>20</sup>

The third and final section of "Der Gottessohn" dealt with writings in which the only separation that occurs at the death of Jesus is the separation of body and soul; the Logos or divinity is never separated from either the soul or the body throughout. With the soul as its vehicle, it visits the souls in the underworld and sets them free; united with Christ's body in the tomb, it defeats corruption. Here Grillmeier's principal source texts are pseudo-Athanasius, *Contra Apollinarium*, a fragment of pseudo-Hippolytus (which he attributes to an unnamed theologian between 400 and 430), and the *De recta fide* of Cyril of Alexandria. In Grillmeier's view, this third approach gets close to a doctrine of hypostatic union, though it lacks the terminology.<sup>21</sup> Grillmeier sees a paradox in the way that the main exponents of the descent of the Logos and of the separation of the Logos from Christ's body in death were also the stoutest defenders of Christ's indivisible unity, in the line from which Monophysitism

---

17 Grillmeier, "Der Gottessohn," 41 (*Mit ihm*, 126): "Sie bilden erst die eine Gruppe der kirchlichen Schriftsteller, welche das Theologoumenon von dem Scheiden und dem Abstieg des Logos vertritt."

18 Grillmeier, "Der Gottessohn," 36–37 (*Mit ihm*, 123).

19 Grillmeier, "Der Gottessohn," 43 (*Mit ihm*, 128): "Wie aber Apollinarios den Tod Christi versteht, ist er ein nur dem Herrn eigener Tod, aber nicht ein allgemein menschliches Sterben. Denn es ist ja keine Trennung von Seele und Leib . . . sondern von Gottheit und Sarx."

20 Grillmeier, "Der Gottessohn," 50–51 (see also 48): "Der Seele wurde eine größere Nähe zur Gottheit eingeräumt als dem Leib."

21 Grillmeier, "Der Gottessohn," 184–203, where the title of the third section is "Untrennbare Einheit in Christus;" observations on the relation between this solution of the *descensus* question and the *unio hypostatica* are mainly on 200–202.

came.<sup>22</sup> Antiochene proponents of a clearer distinction between the divine Word and the humanity of Jesus, on the other hand, seem never to have been attracted to the doctrine of the descent of the Logos.<sup>23</sup>

The phrases which were later to become famous, ‘Logos-Sarx’ and ‘Logos-Anthropos’, do not appear anywhere in “Der Gottessohn im Totenreich.” But when Grillmeier prepared his opening contribution to *Das Konzil von Chalkedon*,<sup>24</sup> he found in his research for the 1949 study a ready-made analysis of the development of christology, which he did not hesitate to use. He already had grouped the fathers prior to the Council of Ephesus in 431 on the basis of how they dealt christologically with the descent into hell; all that was lacking were terms that could be applied in a more general christological context. In his contribution to *Das Konzil von Chalkedon*, “Die theologische und sprachliche Vorbereitung der christologischen Formel von Chalkedon,” this new terminology makes its first appearance rather tentatively in a note, where he links Logos-Sarx with Pneuma-Sarx.<sup>25</sup> He assigns to Irenaeus and Hippolytus only an anticipation of the later framework, and reserves the full emergence of the Logos-Sarx schema to the analysis of fourth-century christology.<sup>26</sup>

The full introduction of the Logos-Sarx schema occurs at the beginning of the second part, entitled “The development of a christology of the Logos-Sarx type.”<sup>27</sup> Grillmeier highlights the same set of fourth-century examples—Arius and his followers, Athanasius, and Apollinarius—as in the section of the 1949 article where he speaks of the ‘Logosabstieg’.<sup>28</sup> In the fifty and more pages that

22 Grillmeier, “Der Gottessohn,” 197: “Arianer und Apollinaristen als extreme, und die Alexandriner des 4. Jahrhunderts als gemäßigte Vertreter der Einigungstheologie sind die stärksten, wenn auch nicht die einzigen Verteidiger der Idee vom Logosabstieg.”

23 Grillmeier, “Der Gottessohn,” 199. He calls these Antiochenes “Vorkämpfer der Trennungstheologie.”

24 Aloys Grillmeier, “Die theologische und sprachliche Vorbereitung der christologischen Formel von Chalkedon,” *Das Konzil von Chalkedon*, 1,5–202.

25 Grillmeier, “Vorbereitung,” 31, n.7: “Wie beide christologische Formeln Pneuma-Sarx, Logos-Sarx, eine ideenmäßige Einheit sind . . .” The two terms ‘Einigungs- und Trennungstheologie’, which he had used in the earlier article, appear often here as well, but they are overtaken by the new terminology, perhaps because of the paradoxes that Grillmeier had noted earlier.

26 Grillmeier, “Vorbereitung,” 37 (Irenaeus) and 40 (Hippolytus). Hippolytus’ contrast of spirit and flesh should not yet be taken “in dem Sinne der ausgesprochenen Logos-Sarx-Theologie späterer Prägung.”

27 Grillmeier, “Vorbereitung,” 67: “Ausbildung einer Christologie vom Typus Logos-Sarx.”

28 See Grillmeier, “Gottessohn,” 36–42 (“Ein zwischen Arianern und ihren Gegnern gemeinsames Theologoumenon”) and 42–47 (“Der Apollinarismus und die Idee der Logosabstieges”). Grillmeier, “Vorbereitung,” 67, says, “Drei Gruppen dieses christologischen



follow, 'Logos-Sarx' figures prominently in both section titles and explanations. The title to the third part is "The battle against the christology of the Logos-Sarx type, and its contribution to the elaboration of the christological formula."<sup>29</sup> Grillmeier points out that the Logos-Sarx schema, since it was familiar and already had a richly developed terminology, gave Apollinarianism an advantage over its opponents. These latter took over and used the concepts of φύσις, ὑπόστασις, and πρόσωπον in a way that prepared for the Council of Chalcedon by developing a 'Word-Man' type of christology. Their task was to devise just as deep a concept of the unity in Christ as that provided by the 'Word-Flesh' schema.<sup>30</sup>

Grillmeier shows a certain diffidence in his use of the new 'Word-Man' terminology; while he uses Logos-Sarx without quotation marks and does not hesitate to compound it in larger combinations like 'Logos-Sarx-Schema' and 'Logos-Sarx-Christologie', he keeps 'Wort-Mensch' and 'Logos-Mensch' in quotation marks and does not use them in forming larger composite terms.<sup>31</sup> They appear mainly in the discussion of Diodore of Tarsus and Theodore of Mopsuestia,<sup>32</sup> but what Grillmeier says about Cyril of Alexandria gives a fine idea of where he thinks all this development was going:

If Cyril of Alexandria now, along with the ecclesiastical tradition, confessed the 'Word-Flesh' schema, and still held firm to the essential and substantial character of the 'incarnation', then his christology presents a synthesis of two christological types, whose best features he has combined.<sup>33</sup>

---

Typus lassen sich unterscheiden, zwei häretische und eine kirchliche, wobei noch vermittelnde Übergänge zu nennen sind."

29 Grillmeier, "Vorbereitung," 120: "Der Kampf gegen die Christologie vom Typus Logos-Sarx und sein Beitrag zur Ausgestaltung der christologischen Formel." 'Formel' here refers to the Chalcedonian definition.

30 Ibid., 122–23. In German, it is "Christologie vom Schema 'Wort-Mensch'."

31 The only exceptions regarding quotation marks are on 141, 155, and 160.

32 The section on Theodore bears the subheading, "'Wort-Mensch' gegen 'Logos-Sarx': zur Christusdeutung des Theodor von Mopsuestia" (Grillmeier, "Vorbereitung," 144).

33 Grillmeier, "Vorbereitung," 175: "Wenn nun Kyrill mit der kirchlichen Überlieferung sich zum Schema 'Wort-Mensch' bekannte, und dennoch die Wesens- und Seinshaftigkeit des 'Menschwerdens' festgehalten hat, dann bedeutet seine Christologie eine Synthese aus zwei christologischen Typen, deren Bestes er miteinander verbunden hat." Georges Jouassard, a Cyril scholar whom Grillmeier frequently quoted (e.g., "Der Gottessohn," 23, n.1), was not entirely happy with the way Cyril was portrayed in "Vorbereitung." See his "Un problème d'Anthropologie et de Christologie chez Cyrille d'Alexandrie," *RSR* 43 (1955):

That sentiment is repeated in a generalized form in Grillmeier's conclusion.<sup>34</sup> The Logos-Mensch schema, though it is less prominently presented by Grillmeier, turns out to be an essential element in the development leading up to the Chalcedonian definition. One should not overstate the case for it; people did not need to give up the Logos-Sarx schema and embrace the new one. It did, however, create room for the constructive discussion of the identity of Jesus Christ in terms of φύσις, ὑπόστασις, and πρόσωπον.

Grillmeier's long treatise was an instant success, and already in one of the first reviews of *Das Konzil von Chalkedon* it was viewed as worthy of being published separately as a book on its own.<sup>35</sup> J.N.D. Kelly used the new way of presenting the history of christology in his *Early Christian Doctrines*. Presenting fourth-century christology, he wrote:

For a large part of the period the prevalent bias was towards what has been called the 'Word-flesh' type of Christology . . . Making no allowance for a human soul in Christ, this viewed the incarnation as the union of the Word with human flesh, and took as its premiss the Platonic conception of man as a body animated by a soul or spirit which was essentially alien from it. In rivalry with this, however, we can trace the growing influence of a 'Word-man' type of Christology, based on the idea that the Word united Himself with a complete humanity, including a soul as well as a body.<sup>36</sup>

Clearly, Kelly saw scientific and pedagogical value in Grillmeier's analysis of patristic christology.

Since Kelly's *Early Christian Doctrines* was widely used as a textbook in universities and seminaries, the new classification became well-known in English-speaking theological scholarship. This probably led to the fact that, when Grillmeier did transform his long article from *Das Konzil von Chalkedon* into a monograph, he did so not in German but in English. Challenged by translator

---

361–78, at 375; and "Saint Cyrille d'Alexandrie et le schéma de l'Incarnation Verbe-chair," *RSR* 44 (1956): 234–42.

34 Grillmeier, "Vorbereitung," 201.

35 See the review by Charles Moeller in *RHE* 48 (1953): 252: "elle pourrait, à elle seule, former un volume." Moeller was also one of the authors in the first volume; his "Le chalcédonisme et le néo-chalcédonisme en Orient de 451 à la fin du VI<sup>e</sup> siècle," is at 1.637–720.

36 J.N.D. Kelly, *Early Christian Doctrines* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1958), 281 and *passim*. The 1958 first edition was quickly followed by a second in 1960, a third in 1965, a fourth in 1968, and a fifth in 1977. Reprints continue to appear.

John Bowden to expand the bibliographical notes for an English translation, Grillmeier found himself with so much new material that he thought it necessary to expand and revise the main text as well as the notes and bibliography. The result was a much larger book, *Christ in Christian Tradition*.<sup>37</sup> In this volume, which appeared in 1965, the new classification was fully deployed. Sections 1 and 2 of part two bore the titles, “The ‘Logos-Sarx’ Christology” and “The ‘Logos-Anthropos’ Christology” respectively.<sup>38</sup> Grillmeier introduced the terms in this way:

we would now draw attention to the first theological interpretations of the person of Christ. The interpretations take the form of ‘frameworks,’ or unitary principles for the explanation of the nature or the person of Jesus Christ. We will term them briefly the ‘Logos-Sarx’ and the ‘Logos-Anthropos’ frameworks. The tension between these two ways of interpreting the person of Jesus Christ dominates the history of christology from Origen to the Council of Ephesus (431).

A few lines later, Grillmeier noted that the new classification “does not entirely coincide with the usual distinction between ‘Alexandrine’ and ‘Antiochene.’” He believed that it gave a deeper insight into “the real problem of patristic christology, namely *how* the inner unity of God and man was to be interpreted.”<sup>39</sup>

Soon demand arose for a French translation. By the time that the French translation appeared in 1973,<sup>40</sup> Grillmeier had expanded and revised his book still further, in the light of the wealth of new scholarship on many phases of the history of christology. There followed a second English edition into which these

---

37 Aloys Grillmeier, *Christ in Christian Tradition* (London: A.R. Mowbray, 1965). It was now 528 pages long. Grillmeier says in the preface (vii), “The original plan, suggested by the Rev. J.S. Bowden, was simply for a translation of this study and an expansion of the bibliographical notes on the basis of the corrected reprint of 1959. Mr. Bowden also took upon himself the troublesome task of translation, which steadily increased as the scope of the revision enlarged.” This was the first title in John Bowden’s distinguished career of scholarly translations.

38 *Ibid.*, 183–237 and 239–360.

39 *Ibid.*, 175.

40 Alois Grillmeier, *Le Christ dans la tradition chrétienne*, *Cogitatio fidei*, vol. 72 (Paris: Éditions du Cerf, 1973). Volume 1 appeared in a revised edition in 2003 as vol. 230 in the *Cogitatio fidei* series. Of volume 2, parts 1, 2, and 4 have been published in the same series as *Cogitatio fidei*, vols 154 (1990), 172 (1993), and 192 (1996).

new developments were incorporated.<sup>41</sup> Meanwhile, in Germany people had been making do with the frequently republished *Das Konzil von Chalkedon*, but in 1979 a German edition of *Christ in Christian Tradition*, containing significant further corrections to the 1975 English second edition, appeared as *Jesus der Christus im Glauben der Kirche*.<sup>42</sup> In short, five different versions of this history of christology appeared in three different languages, with no two of them corresponding exactly as translation to original. Alois Grillmeier was a man who did not hesitate to correct and deepen his own scholarship in the light of the work of others.

International popularity does not rule out hostile criticism. In the introduction to the first German edition in 1979, Grillmeier took note of some of the criticisms that had been leveled at his new classification since its unveiling in 1951. He said:

Many critics have called on me either to change my interpretation of certain Fathers or even to eliminate this ‘tank’ [*Panzer*] as such from any revision of this book. But a fresh examination forces me to recognize that it is impossible to do without it.<sup>43</sup>

The “tank” to which he is referring is of course the famous binary classification. As the years and the editions continued, Grillmeier had become more and more certain that it was valid; it had, in effect, been subjected to repeated experiment and testing.

It would be beyond the scope of this chapter to analyse the reviews of the various editions of Grillmeier’s monumental book, particularly since I am interested principally in the reception of this use of the categories Logos-Sarx and Logos-Anthropos. Some scholars contested the category to which a particular father was assigned, as we have seen Jouassard do in the case of Cyril

---

41 Alois Grillmeier, *Christ in Christian Tradition*, vol. 1: *From the Apostolic Age to Chalcedon (AD 451)*, 2nd ed. (London: A.R. Mowbray, and Atlanta, Ga: John Knox Press, 1975).

42 Alois Grillmeier, *Jesus der Christus im Glauben der Kirche*, Bd 1 (Freiburg: Herder, 1979). There have been two “verbesserte und ergänzte” reissues of this volume in 1982 and 1990, and a 2004 reprint.

43 Grillmeier, *Jesus der Christus*, 3rd ed., viii: “Manche Kritiker haben gefordert, entweder einzelne Väter anders zu deuten oder diesen ‘Panzer’ als solchen bei einer Neubearbeitung des Werkes abzustreifen. Doch ließ eine erneute Überprüfung erkennen, daß man nicht darauf verzichten kann.” He does not list those critics. André de Halleux, in his review of the new German first volume in *RTL* 11 (1980): 97, wrote that Grillmeier, “sensible aux critiques qui lui sont adressées, semble-t-il la relativiser quelque peu (p. viii).” I do not see that softening.

of Alexandria. Some no doubt shared the late Richard Norris' suspicion of the claim that Arius and then especially Apollinarius imported into theology a "platonizing conception" of human nature.<sup>44</sup> But Norris himself found the Logos-Flesh, Logos-Anthropos classification so useful that he employed it in the introduction to his popular handbook of christological texts published in 1980.<sup>45</sup> The classification found its way into basic works of scholarship, also. Manlio Simonetti, in his classic work on the Arian crisis, which was based heavily on primary sources, found Grillmeier's 'schema logos/carne' a useful category.<sup>46</sup> Basil Studer, in his survey of the doctrines of God, Christ, and salvation, frequently cites Grillmeier's book and employs the category of the 'Logos-Sarx framework', but not 'Logos-Anthropos', and when he comes to his chapter on "The Great Christological Traditions," Grillmeier's favourite classification is not to be found.<sup>47</sup>

One can observe in those twentieth-century responses to Grillmeier's thesis a mixture of admiration and reserve. As an encyclopedic survey of the development of christology in the Greek East, Grillmeier's book has swept the field: hardly anyone cites Harnack any more on the subject! The convenience of the Logos-Sarx and Logos-Anthropos classification won its entrance into some important pedagogical materials, but not without criticism. Justo Gonzalez wrote, "Briefly, we may characterize the Antiochene doctrine as a 'Logos-man' Christology, in contrast to the 'Logos-flesh' Christology of the Alexandrines," and explained several implications over the next ten pages,<sup>48</sup> but he also took

---

44 R.A. Norris, Jr., *Manhood and Christ: A Study in the Christology of Theodore of Mopsuestia* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1963), 96; Norris explains his criticism in n.5 on 97.

45 Idem, *The Christological Controversy*, Sources of Early Christian Thought (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1980), 21–26. See pages 21 and 23 ("Logos-flesh' model"), 23 and 26 ("Logos-Anthropos' model").

46 Manlio Simonetti, *La crisi ariana nel IV secolo*, SEAug, vol. 11 (Rome: Institutum Patristicum Augustinianum, 1975), 368–69. In a 1988 article republished in his *Studi sulla cristologia del II e III secolo*, SEAug, vol. 44 (Rome: Institutum Patristicum Augustinianum, 1993), 8, he described Grillmeier's book as "suo fondamentale manuale di cristologia." By that time, an Italian translation had begun to appear under the title, *Gesù il Cristo nella fide della Chiesa* (Brescia: Paideia, 1982–2001).

47 Basil Studer, *Trinity and Incarnation: the Faith of the Early Church*, ed. Andrew Louth (Collegeville: Liturgical Press, 1993), 194–95 and 199–210. In the German book from which that was translated, *Gott und unsere Erlösung im Glauben der Alten Kirche* (Düsseldorf: Patmos Verlag, 1985), the respective pages are 233–35 and 238–51.

48 Justo L. Gonzales, *A History of Christian Thought*, vol. 1: *From the Beginnings to the Council of Chalcedon* (Nashville: Abingdon, 1970), 353–61.

issue with Grillmeier on several topics, including the role of the human soul of Christ. Frances Young has some pithy observations:

The difference between these two kinds of thought, Alexandrian and Antiochene, is often expressed in the formulae *Word-Flesh Christology* and *Word-Man Christology*. These terms are useful up to a point, but the two sides tended to use overlapping terminology and not stick to a consistent set of terms.<sup>49</sup>

Over-concentration on the Word-Flesh/Word-Man formulae can result in imposing a preconceived framework on the material and so distort the interpreter's perception. The terminology should not be regarded as decisive: representatives of both sides in the christological controversies continued to use 'flesh' and 'man' interchangeably, asserting that this was scriptural usage. Nor is the use or absence of a 'human soul' in a christology an infallible guide to the basic christological principles in operation.<sup>50</sup>

Thomas Weinandy recently wrote,

By forcing all Patristic Christology to fall into either of two camps—Logos/Sarx vs Logos/Anthropos, thus making the presence or absence of a human soul in Christ the heart of every christological issue, Grillmeier has not only wrongly interpreted such Fathers as Athanasius and Cyril of Alexandria, but he has also taught a whole generation of students what is erroneous.<sup>51</sup>

Many scholars and teachers who have made use of these categories over the last half-century would find that dismissal too strong, but it may be worth asking whether Grillmeier's terminology simplifies many issues and therefore gives an unwarranted sense of mastery. Once having placed an author or a writing into one category or another, one may feel excused from investigating further into finer distinctions and ambiguities.

In his 1949 article, "Der Gottessohn im Totenreich," Grillmeier uses neither category, although he does group the theological writings that he studies in ways that later will be designated by those categories. On the terminology, he

---

49 Frances M. Young, *From Nicaea to Chalcedon: A Guide to the Literature and its Background* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1983), 180.

50 *Ibid.*, 195.

51 Thomas G. Weinandy, *Athanasius: A Theological Introduction* (Aldershot and Burlington, Vt: Ashgate, 2007), 46, n.21.

may have been influenced by Marcel Richard, his fellow Jesuit and the author of a chapter in volume one of *Das Konzil von Chalkedon*.<sup>52</sup> In “Vorbereitung,” Grillmeier cites Richard’s use of the category ‘Verbe-chair’ as applied to Athanasius’ christology.<sup>53</sup> But even earlier, in an influential 1947 article, Richard had written, “In fact, we find there, from the pen of Athanasius, the classic accusation of all the partisans of a Word-flesh [Verbe-chair] christological schema against those of a Word-man [Verbe-homme] schema.”<sup>54</sup> Although Grillmeier cites that article in “Vorbereitung” in other contexts,<sup>55</sup> he does not give credit to Richard as the originator of the two categories.

Seeing Grillmeier’s later works through the eyes of the 1949 “Der Gottessohn im Totenreich” brings out one significant change in his outlook. In his description of how christology developed in the light of how the descent into hell was understood, the presence or absence of a human soul in Jesus is not a critical consideration. In its third and final section, Grillmeier points to “two heralds” of what he described as “indivisible unity in Christ.” “Gregory of Nyssa and Gregory of Nazianzus are among the first and certainly among the most significant theologians prior to Ephesus who found the correct synthesis in our question and advocated the indivisibility of the connection between God and humanity, and even with the dead body.”<sup>56</sup> Others whom Grillmeier cites include the author(s) of pseudo-Athanasius, *Contra Apollinarium*, and Cyril of

52 Richard has a chapter in vol. 1 of *Das Konzil von Chalkedon*: “Les florilèges diphysites du v<sup>e</sup> et du vi<sup>e</sup> siècle,” 1.721–48.

53 This is a mention in passing (in n.11 on 102) of Richard’s “Bulletin de patrologie,” *MSR* 6 (1949): 129: “La doctrine christologique de ces documents est du type Verbe-chair, mais à la façon de saint Athanase.” If I may judge by the typography, this was a last-minute addition. Two pages earlier (127) in that same “Bulletin de patrologie,” while commenting on Th. Camelot’s Sources chrétiennes edition of Athanasius’ *De incarnatione Verbi*, Richard observes, “La christologie du traité *De incarnatione Verbi* nous paraît en effet être du type Verbe-chair le plus strict.”

54 Marcel Richard, “Saint Athanase et la psychologie du Christ selon les Ariens,” *MSR* 4 (1947): 16: “En fait nous trouvons là sous la plume d’Athanase, l’accusation classique de tous les partisans d’un schéma christologique Verbe-chair contre ceux du schéma Verbe-homme.” That passage is remarkable for its coordination of both categories in a single context. In that article Richard also employed the designation ‘Verbe-chair’ by itself (31, 37, and 46). At the end of his career, Richard recognized that this article was widely criticised, but he stood by it. See Marcel Richard, *Opera minora*, vol. 1 (Turnhout: Brepols, 1976), 13.

55 Other references in Grillmeier, “Vorbereitung”: 70, n.7; 75, n.4; 79, nn.4 and 5 (addressing a critical question about Richard’s theory); 87, n.28; and 155, n.27. In “Vorbereitung,” Grillmeier also frequently refers to Marcel Richard’s earlier article, “L’introduction du mot ‘hypostase’ dans la théologie de l’incarnation,” *MSR* 2 (1945): 5–32 and 243–70.

56 Grillmeier, “Der Gottessohn,” 184.



Alexandria, along with some fragments that bear a remarkable resemblance to Cyril.<sup>57</sup> His citation from Gregory of Nazianzus does not seem to me to advance his case,<sup>58</sup> but there is good reason to quote Gregory of Nyssa in this connection.<sup>59</sup> Gregory of Nyssa explicitly affirms that after the death of Jesus on the cross, the Logos was never at any moment separated from either his soul, with which the Word descended to the underworld to free the souls of the dead, or his body, in which the Word defeated corruption. One of the most striking examples of that claim occurs—reasonably enough—in *De tridui inter mortem et resurrectionem domini nostri Jesu Christi spatium*.<sup>60</sup> The major issue for Grillmeier was whether Christ's death was the separation of the Logos from his flesh or that of his soul from his body. With Gregory of Nyssa's solution, the Logos confronts the ruler of death united to the soul of Christ. The soteriological value of the *descensus* is maintained, but without the separation of the Logos from his flesh that characterised the earlier Logos-Sarx tradition. Thus the dilemma, Logos or soul, really is shown to be a false one.

This solution, which I take to be Grillmeier's 'best' solution to the problem of what happens to Christ ontologically in the three days between death and resurrection, raises one further question about the significance of his Logos-Sarx/Logos-Anthropos distinction. The unity of the Logos both with body and with soul after their separation at death requires a view of divinity as so totally transcendent to all being, material or immaterial, that it can be united to it without ontological contradiction, without incoherence. If that was the theological move that made the dogmatic definition of Chalcedon possible, then the decisive development was not the rise of Logos-Anthropos christology. The latter succeeded only in demonstrating that an orthodox answer to the main doctrinal controversies about the Word incarnate could not be achieved by rearranging the categories of christology itself. What was necessary was the retrieval of the sense of divine transcendence that was already manifest in older theologians like Irenaeus and Origen.<sup>61</sup>

57 Ibid., 185–96.

58 Gregory of Nazianzus, *Or.* 30.5 (SC 250.232–36).

59 Grillmeier, "Der Gottessohn," 184, cites Gregory of Nyssa, *Con. Eun.* 2.179 (GNO 1.x) and *Ep.* 3 (GNO 8/2.x–x).

60 Gregory of Nyssa, *De tridui spatium* (GN) 9/1.293–4). See Hubertus R. Drobner, ed., *Gregor von Nyssa. Die drei Tage zwischen Tod und Auferstehung unseres Herrn Jesus Christus*, *Philosophia Patrum*, vol. 5 (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1982), 29–30 and 114–24.

61 The author gratefully acknowledges the support of a grant from the Onderzoeksraad of the Katholieke Universiteit Leuven for much of the research upon which this article is based.



## Bibliography

- Gregory Nazianzus. *Orationes* (Paul Gallay and Maurice Jourjon, eds, *Grégoire de Nazianze. Discours 27–31*, SC, vols 250. Paris: Les Éditions du Cerf, 1978).
- Gregory of Nyssa. *Gregorii Nysseni Opera*, 10 vols. Leiden: Brill, 1972–2009.
- . *De tridui inter mortem et resurrectionem domini nostri Jesu Christi spatio* (Hubertus R. Drobner, trans., *Gregor von Nyssa. Die drei Tage zwischen Tod und Auferstehung unseres Herrn Jesus Christus*, Philosophia Patrum, Bd 5. Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1982).
- Drewery, Benjamin. “Antiochien II. Die Bedeutung Antiochiens in der alten Kirche.” *TRE* 3 (1978): 103–13.
- Gonzales, Justo L. *A History of Christian Thought*, vol. 1: *From the Beginnings to the Council of Chalcedon*. Nashville: Abingdon, 1970.
- Grillmeier, Alois. “Der Gottessohn im Totenreich. Soteriologische und christologische Motivierung der Descensuslehre in der älteren christlichen Überlieferung.” *ZKTh* 71 (1949): 1–53 and 184–203.
- . *Mit ihm und in ihm*. Freiburg: Herder, 1975.
- . *Jesus der Christus im Glauben der Kirche*, Bd 1. Freiburg: Herder, 1979.
- . *Gesù il Cristo nella fide della Chiesa*, 6 vols. Brescia: Paideia, 1982–2001.
- Grillmeier, Aloys, “Die theologische und sprachliche Vorbereitung der christologischen Formel von Chalkedon.” In *Das Konzil von Chalkedon: Geschichte und Gegenwart*, Bd 1: *Der Glaube von Chalkedon*, edited by Aloys Grillmeier and Heinrich Bacht, 5–202. Würzburg: Echter-Verlag, 1951.
- . *Christ in Christian Tradition*. London: A.R. Mowbray, 1965.
- . *Le Christ dans la tradition chrétienne*. *Cogitatio fidei*, vol. 72. Paris: Éditions du Cerf, 1973.
- . *Christ in Christian Tradition*, vol. 1: *From the Apostolic Age to Chalcedon (AD 451)*, 2nd ed. London: A.R. Mowbray, and Atlanta, Ga: John Knox Press, 1975.
- . *Christ in Christian Tradition*, vol. 2: *From the Council of Chalcedon (451) to Gregory the Great (590–604)*, part 1: *Reception and Contradiction: The Development of the Discussion about Chalcedon from 451 to the Beginning of the Reign of Justinian*. Translated by Pauline Allen and John Cawte. Atlanta, Ga: John Knox Press, 1987.
- Grillmeier, Aloys, with Theresia Hainthaler, *Christ in Christian Tradition*, vol. 2: *From the Council of Chalcedon (451) to Gregory the Great (590–604)*, part 2: *The Church of Constantinople in the Sixth Century*. Translated by Pauline Allen and John Cawte. Louisville, Ky: Westminster John Knox Press, 1995.
- Grillmeier, Aloys, and Heinrich Bacht, eds. *Das Konzil von Chalkedon. Geschichte und Gegenwart*, 3 vols. Würzburg: Echter-Verlag, 1951–1954.
- de Halleux, André. *Compte rendu de Jesus der Christus im Glauben der Kirche*. *RTL* 11 (1980): 97.

- van den Hoek, Annewies. "The 'Catechetical' School of Early Christian Alexandria and its Philonic Heritage." *HTR* 90 (1997): 59–87
- Jouassard, Georges. "Un problème d'Anthropologie et de Christologie chez Cyrille d'Alexandrie." *RSR* 43 (1955): 361–78.
- . "Saint Cyrille d'Alexandrie et le schéma de l'Incarnation Verbe-chair." *RSR* 44 (1956): 234–42.
- Kelly, J.N.D. *Early Christian Doctrines*. New York: Harper and Brothers, 1958.
- Loofs, Friedrich. *Leitfaden zum Studium der Dogmengeschichte*, revised by Kurt Aland, 7th ed. Tübingen: Max Niemeyer Verlag, 1968.
- Moeller, Charles. *Compte rendu de Das Konzil von Chalkedon*, t. I. *RHE* 48 (1953): 252–61.
- Norris, Jr., Richard A. *Manhood and Christ: A Study in the Christology of Theodore of Mopsuestia*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1963.
- . *The Christological Controversy, Sources of Early Christian Thought*. Philadelphia: Fortress, 1980.
- Richard, Marcel. "L'introduction du mot 'hypostase' dans la théologie de l'incarnation." *MSR* 2 (1945): 5–32 and 243–70.
- . "Saint Athanase et la psychologie du Christ selon les Ariens." *MSR* 4 (1947): 5–54.
- . "Bulletin de patrologie." *MSR* 6 (1949): 117–37.
- . "Les florilèges diphysites du v<sup>e</sup> et du vi<sup>e</sup> siècle." In *Das Konzil von Chalkedon: Geschichte und Gegenwart*, Bd 1: *Der Glaube von Chalkedon*, edited by Aloys Grillmeier and Heinrich Bacht, 721–48. Würzburg: Echter-Verlag, 1951.
- . *Opera minora*, vol. 1. Turnhout: Brepols, 1976.
- Sellers, R.V. *Two Ancient Christologies. A Study in the Christological Thought of the Schools of Alexandria and Antioch in the Early History of Christian Doctrine*. London: SPCK, 1940.
- . *The Council of Chalcedon: A Historical and Doctrinal Survey*. London: SPCK, 1961.
- Simonetti, Manlio. *La crisi ariana nel IV secolo*, SEAug, vol. 11. Rome: Institutum Patristicum Augustinianum, 1975.
- . *Studi sulla cristologia del II e III secolo*, SEAug, vol. 44. Rome: Institutum Patristicum Augustinianum, 1993.
- Studer, Basil. *Gott und unsere Erlösung im Glauben der Alten Kirche*. Düsseldorf: Patmos Verlag, 1985.
- . *Trinity and Incarnation: the Faith of the Early Church*, edited by Andrew Louth. Collegeville: Liturgical Press, 1993.
- Weinandy, Thomas G. *Athanasius: A Theological Introduction*. Aldershot and Burlington: Ashgate, 2007.
- Young, Frances M. *From Nicaea to Chalcedon: A Guide to the Literature and its Background*. Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1983.

# Christological Declarations with Oriental Churches

*Theresia Hainthaler*

## 1 Preliminary Remarks

### 1.1 *Oriental Orthodox Churches*

Characteristic of their tradition is the *mia physis* formula: there is *mia physis tou Theou Logou sesarkomene*, that is, one nature of the incarnate God Logos. To the family of Oriental Orthodox churches belong the Coptic Orthodox, the Syrian Orthodox, the Armenian Apostolic, the Ethiopian Orthodox, the Eritrean Orthodox, and the Malankara Orthodox Syrian Church. They all accept this *mia physis* formula and they reject the definition of the fourth ecumenical council (Chalcedon), that Christ is in two natures one person (*proso-pon*) or hypostasis. Because of the confession of the Oriental Orthodox to one nature in Christ they have been called ‘monophysites’, a term “in some respects infelicitous and misleading.”<sup>1</sup>

The Assyrian Church of the East in no way belongs to this church family; on the contrary, it is viewed as their direct opponent with its christological formula of two natures and two *qnome* (hypostases) and one *parsopa* (*proso-pon*). But it is the ‘Church of the East’, a name used by themselves already in the first millennium; this church reached out to the East, to China, already in the seventh century. A christological declaration with the Catholic Church was signed on 11 November 1994.

### 1.2 *The Problem*

If Christ is one nature, how can he “be recognised in two natures” (definition of Chalcedon)? Thus, the two main statements of the Oriental Orthodox churches and the Chalcedonian churches, that is, the Eastern Orthodox as well as the

---

1 So Pauline Allen, “Monophysitismus,” in *TRE*, Bd 23: *Minucius Felix—Name/Namensgebung* (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1994), 219–33, esp. 219. See also her edition together with Albert Van Roey, *Monophysite Texts of the Sixth Century*, OLA, vol. 56 (Leuven: Peeters, 1994). The texts are partly analysed already in Aloys Grillmeier with Theresia Hainthaler, *Christ in Christian Tradition*, vol. 2: *From the Council of Chalcedon (451) to Gregory the Great (590–604)*, part 2: *The Church of Constantinople in the Sixth Century*, trans. Pauline Allen and John Cawte (London: Mowbray, A Cassell imprint; Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 1995).



Chalcedonians like Leontius of Byzantium and Leontius of Jerusalem wrote extensive treatises against the ‘Eutychians’ or pleaded in other ways for the two natures, like the monk Eustathius.<sup>5</sup> Leontius of Byzantium demonstrated that the number two as such does not separate.<sup>6</sup> In the sixth century the literary genre of collection of definitions, and of *aporiai*, was developed in order to refute mutually the language of the two natures or of the one nature.<sup>7</sup>

There have been some opportunities, like the Colloquy with the Severans in 532, convened by Emperor Justinian, to clarify the concepts and to have a dialogue on these questions. This chance was lost.<sup>8</sup>

### 1.3 *Christological Declarations—Short Survey*

With the unofficial consultations of Orthodox and Oriental Orthodox theologians in the framework of ‘Faith and Order’ of the World Council of Churches from 1964 till 1971 in four places and their respective statements of Aarhus 1964, Bristol 1967, Geneva 1970, and Addis Ababa 1971,<sup>9</sup> the ground was prepared for the following initiatives.

For the Catholic Church it was the Second Vatican Council and the foundation Pro Oriente (by Cardinal König in November 1964) that led to the unofficial dialogue, the so-called Vienna Consultations, with the first from 7 to 12 September 1971. Already on 27 October 1971, Patriarch Ignatius Yacoub III of the Syrian Orthodox Church, made a visit in Rome and signed with Pope Paul VI their “Common Declaration” saying that “there is no difference in the faith they profess concerning the mystery of the Word of God made flesh and become really man, even if over the centuries difficulties have arisen out of the differ-

---

Marianne Ehrhardt (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 478–620, with 628–31 (summary by myself).

5 Eustathius, *Ep. de duab. nat.* (J.H. Declerck and Pauline Allen, eds, *Pamphilus theologus. Diversorum capitum seu difficultatum solutio; Eustathius monachus. Epistula de duabus naturis*, CCG, vol. 19 [Leuven: Turnhout, 1989]). See Grillmeier’s analysis in *Christ in Christian Tradition*, 2/2.262–70.

6 Grillmeier, *Christ in Christian Tradition*, 2/2.198–200.

7 Aloys Grillmeier, *Christ in Christian Tradition*, vol. 2: *From the Council of Chalcedon (451) to Gregory the Great*, part 1: *Reception and Contradiction. The Development of the Discussion about Chalcedon from 451 to the Beginning of the Reign of Justinian*, trans. Pauline Allen and John Cawte (London: A.R. Mowbray, 1987), 82–87. See also Grillmeier, Hainthaler, *Christ in Christian Tradition*, 2/2 and 2/3.

8 See idem, *Christ in Christian Tradition*, 2/2.230–48.

9 For an analysis see Dietmar W. Winkler, *Koptische Kirche und Reichskirche. Altes Schisma und neuer Dialog*, ITS, vol. 48 (Innsbruck: Tyrolia Verlagsanstalt, 1997), 222–39.

ent theological expressions by which this faith was expressed.”<sup>10</sup> Later, on 23 June 1984 followed the “Common Declaration” of Pope John Paul II and Moran Mar Ignatius Zakka I Iwas, with the most extended agreement of the Catholic Church with an Oriental Orthodox Church, such that, because of “our identity in faith, though not yet complete,” if access to a priest of their own church is “materially or morally impossible” faithful of the “two sister churches” are authorised “to ask for the sacraments of penance, eucharist and anointing of the sick from lawful priests of either of our two sister churches.”<sup>11</sup>

Pope Shenouda III of the Coptic Orthodox Church signed a christological declaration with Pope Paul VI on 10 May 1973, which opened up an official bilateral theological dialogue between Copts and Catholics.<sup>12</sup> Its dialogue commission composed its “Christological Declaration” in 1976 in Vienna, which will be dealt with here. A later “Short Christological Formula” in 1988, legitimised by Pope John Paul II afterwards, was signed without involvement of the dialogue commission by the pro-nuncio.

Concerning the Armenians, there are two christological declarations signed respectively by the Catholicos of all Armenians, and the Catholicos of Cilicia with Pope John Paul II in Rome on 13 December 1996 and 25 January 1997, however without the involvement of their respective synods.<sup>13</sup>

---

10 “Common Declaration by Pope Paul VI and His Holiness Mar Ignatius Iacob III” (27 October 1971) ([www.vatican.va/roman\\_curia/pontifical\\_councils/chrstuni/anc-orient-ch-docs/rc\\_pc\\_chrstuni\\_doc\\_19711025\\_syrian-church\\_en.html](http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/pontifical_councils/chrstuni/anc-orient-ch-docs/rc_pc_chrstuni_doc_19711025_syrian-church_en.html)). Probably in vol. I of *Growth in Agreement*.

11 “Common Declaration of Pope John Paul II and His Holiness Mar Ignatius Zakka I Iwas,” 9 (23 June 1984) in *Growth in Agreement II: Reports and Agreed Statements of Ecumenical Conversations on a World Level, 1982–1998*, ed. Jeffrey Gros, Harding Meyer, and William G. Rusch, Faith and Order Paper no. 187 (Geneva: World Council of Churches, 2000), 692–3. For an analysis (and a German translation of the two declarations) see Theresia Hainthaler, “Die Gemeinsame Erklärung vom 23. Juni 1984. Theologische Aussage und ökumenische Bedeutung,” in *Gemeinsamer Glaube und pastorale Zusammenarbeit. 25 Jahre Weggemeinschaft zwischen der Syrisch-Orthodoxen Kirche und der Römisch-Katholischen Kirche*, ed. J. Oeldemann, Epiphania Egregia, Bd 6 (Basel: Reinhardt Friedrich Verlag, 2011), 24–51.

12 “Common Declaration of Pope Paul VI and of the Pope of Alexandria Shenouda III,” (10 May 1973) ([www.vatican.va/roman\\_curia/pontifical\\_councils/chrstuni/anc-orient-ch-docs/rc\\_pc\\_chrstuni\\_doc\\_19730510\\_en.html](http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/pontifical_councils/chrstuni/anc-orient-ch-docs/rc_pc_chrstuni_doc_19730510_en.html)).

13 “Common Declaration of Pope John Paul II and Catholicos Karekin I,” (13 December 1996) in Gros et al., *Growth in Agreement II*, 707–708; and “Common Declaration of Pope John Paul II and Catholicos Aram I Keshishian,” (25 January 1997) ([http://www.vatican.va/roman\\_curia/pontifical\\_councils/chrstuni/anc-orient-ch-docs/rc\\_pc\\_chrstuni\\_doc\\_19970125\\_jp-ii-aram-i\\_en.html](http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/pontifical_councils/chrstuni/anc-orient-ch-docs/rc_pc_chrstuni_doc_19970125_jp-ii-aram-i_en.html)).

A “Doctrinal Agreement on Christology” of the dialogue commission of the Malankara Orthodox Syrian Church and the Catholic Church was composed at their first meeting 22–25 October 1989 in Kottayam and issued with the approval of Pope John Paul II and Catholicos Mar Baselius Marthoma Mathews I on 3 June 1990.<sup>14</sup>

To sum up, there are quite some bilateral christological declarations of the Catholic Church with Oriental Orthodox churches (Copts, Syrian Orthodox, Armenian, and Malankara Orthodox Syrians), signed by the heads of the churches, however, there is no christological declarations of the Catholic Church with the whole family of the Oriental Orthodox churches.<sup>15</sup>

In addition, christological declarations of official dialogue commissions have been made by the World Alliance of Reformed Churches and the Oriental Orthodox (Driebergen, 13 September 1994),<sup>16</sup> as well as the churches of the Anglican communion with the Oriental Orthodox<sup>17</sup> (in Etchmiadzin 2002).<sup>18</sup>

14 “Statement of the Joint Commission between the Roman Catholic Church and the Malankara Orthodox Syrian Church,” (3 June 1990), in Gros et al., *Growth in Agreement II*, 696–7: “The members of this commission unanimously adopted a common text concerning their faith in the mystery of the incarnate Word in order to put an end to the christological disagreement which existed between the two churches. This doctrinal agreement was submitted to the authorities of the Roman Catholic Church and the Malankara Orthodox Syrian Church, who have approved it and decided that it should be made public on 3 June 1990, the feast of Pentecost.”

15 Although there is a Joint International Commission for the theological dialogue since 2004 with annual meetings, the time has not come yet to deal with this topic (cf. problem of Copts with Assyrians). A good summary on the Coptic—Assyrian relations till 2002 can be found in Dietmar W. Winkler, *Ostsyrisches Christentum. Untersuchungen zu Christologie, Ekklesiologie und zu den ökumenischen Beziehungen der Assyrischen Kirche des Ostens*, Studien zur Orientalischen Kirchengeschichte, Bd 26 (Münster: LIT, 2003), 193–202. See also Theresia Hainthaler, “Entwicklungen im Dialog der orientalisch-orthodoxen Kirchen,” *Materialdienst des Konfessionskundlichen Instituts Bensheim* 57 (2006), 15–18, especially 15–16.

16 “Report of the International Theological Dialogue between the Oriental Orthodox Family of Churches and the World Alliance of Reformed Churches (1993–2001),” in *Growth in Agreement III: International Dialogue Texts and Agreed Statements 1998–2005*, ed. Jeffrey Gros, Thomas F. Best, and Lorelei F. Fuchs, Faith and Order Paper no. 204 (Geneva: World Council of Churches, 2007), 41–42.

17 Anglican—Oriental Orthodox International Commission, “Agreed Statement on Christology (10 November 2002),” in Gros et al., *Growth in Agreement III*, 35–38.

18 The next (second) meeting of the Anglican—Oriental Orthodox International Commission was held 3–7 October 2013 at St Columba’s House, Woking, England, with conversations on the *filioque* (no further information is given). [www.anglicancommunion.org/ministry/ecumenical/dialogues/oriental/docs/2013communiquet.cfm](http://www.anglicancommunion.org/ministry/ecumenical/dialogues/oriental/docs/2013communiquet.cfm).



Quite recently, on 15 October 2014 in Cairo, a revised “Agreed Statement on Christology” was signed.)

The official dialogue between Eastern Orthodox and Oriental Orthodox was started, after the promising start of the four unofficial meetings (from 1964 to 1971, see above), in 1985 in Chambésy.<sup>19</sup> In 1989 an “Agreed Statement” was adopted in Deir Anba Bishoy in Wadi El-Natrun,<sup>20</sup> and in 1990 a “Second Agreed Statement and Recommendations to the Churches” in Chambésy 1990.<sup>21</sup> The reception of these christological texts by all Orthodox churches is not yet completed.

Now, two examples of bilateral christological declarations of the Catholic Church with Oriental Orthodox will be looked at, then two declarations of the Eastern Orthodox with the Oriental Orthodox, then one each of the Reformed World Alliance and the Anglican communion with the Oriental Orthodox. At the end the Assyrian—Catholic declaration will be analysed.

## 2 Oriental Orthodox—Catholic Bilateral Agreements

### 2.1 *The Vienna Christological Declaration of 1976<sup>22</sup> of the Dialogue Commission*

1) The common ground: At the beginning of the declaration the common ground is described: the apostolic traditions, the first three ecumenical councils (Nicaea 325, Constantinople 381, and Ephesus 431), of course, omitting Chalcedon, which is not accepted by the Copts. Agreement is also expressed in the “common Fathers before the schism”—where Cyril of Alexandria is included without naming him. The first three councils are again mentioned in no. 3. Therefore, a declaration is formed on the basis of the christology of the

19 The pre-history and the development till 1989 (including) is described by André de Halleux, “Actualité du néochalcédonisme. Un accord christologique récent entre Orthodoxes,” *RTL* 21 (1990): 32–54; analysis and literature is in Winkler, *Koptische Kirche*, 239–60.

20 Orthodox—Eastern Orthodox Joint Commission, “Agreed Statement” (24 June 1989), in Gros et al., *Growth in Agreement II*, 191–3.

21 Orthodox—Eastern Orthodox Joint Commission, “Second Agreed Statement and Recommendations to the Churches,” (28 September 1990), in Gros et al., *Growth in Agreement II*, 194–9.

22 “Christological Declaration,” (29 August 1976), *ISPCU* 76 (1991/1), 21. The Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity included in this special issue of *ISPCU* 76 (1991/1) “The Roman Catholic Church and the Coptic Orthodox Church. Documents (1973–1988),” the principal documents of the first phase of the Catholic—Coptic dialogue from 1973 to 1988.



first three councils. Then a christological confession is made, starting with the triune God; there are, in fact, no problems in the field of the doctrine of the Trinity. At the beginning and at the end of the declaration, reference is made to the *oikonomia*, which points to the soteriological perspective expressed from the very beginning. There is a clear emphasis on the fact, that the divine Logos is the subject of the incarnation.

2) Christ's ontology: Specific Alexandrian elements are the six adverbs (two additional to the four Chalcedonian ones),<sup>23</sup> the phrase "twinkling of an eye" from the Coptic liturgy (a confession in the rite of consignation and commixtion,<sup>24</sup> in the Gregorios and the Basileios anaphora). We find typical Alexandrian statements (also characteristic for Philoxenus of Mabbug): God's 'becoming', "became visible" (§ 2) (found also in Antiochian theology, here with an additional explanation!), "became consubstantial." (§ 1) "He took upon himself the form of a servant," is a quotation of Philippians 2:7. The properties of the divinity and of the humanity are preserved. This is in conformity with the Definition of Chalcedon (the properties of each of the natures are preserved),<sup>25</sup> but the declaration of 1976 avoids speaking of 'natures' (i.e. 'nature' in plural), thus avoiding causing scandal to the Copts. The term 'nature' is used only in the later passage with hermeneutical explanation.

3) Against heresies: Based on this now formulated common faith, seen as those of the first three ecumenical councils (but in fact also in agreement with the Chalcedonian definition), four heresies are condemned, two of the fourth century (Arianism and Apollinarianism) and two of the fifth (Nestorianism and Eutychianism). Explicitly "a personal, real union" is professed (something Nestorius would have accepted), but "a conjunction or combination of two

23 See J. Robert Wright, "La signification des quatre adverbs chalcédoniens dans des accords œcuméniques récents," *Irénikon* 71 (1998): 5–16, mentions this problem. It seems that two adverbs have been added at the beginning: "without mingling, without commixtion". Winkler, *Koptische Kirche*, 305; the first adverb is taken thrice.

24 Winkler, *Koptische Kirche*, 173–175.

25 Council of Chalcedon, *Definitio fidei* (Eduard Schwartz, ed., *Acta Conciliorum Oecumenicorum*, t. 2: *Concilium Universale Chalcedonense*, vol. 1: *Acta Graeca*, pars 2: *Actio secunda. Epistularum Collectio B. Actiones III–VII* [Berlin: De Gruyter, 1933], 129): *σφζομένης δὲ μᾶλλον τῆς ιδιότητος ἑκατέρως φύσεως*. This is v. 20 of the *definitio* as divided by J. Ortiz de Urbina, "Das Symbol von Chalkedon. Sein Text, sein Werden, seine dogmatische Bedeutung," in *Das Konzil von Chalkedon: Geschichte und Gegenwart*, Bd 1: *Der Glaube von Chalkedon*, ed. Alois Grillmeier and Heinrich Bacht (Würzburg: Echter-Verlag, 1951), 389–90, and used by Alois Grillmeier, *Jesus der Christus im Glauben der Kirche*, Bd 1 (Freiburg: Herder, 1979), 754–55; and Theresia Hainthaler, "A Short Analysis of the Definition of Chalcedon and Some Reflections," *The Harp* 20 (2006): 329–330.

persons' entities" is rejected (conjunction means *synapheia*). Even a *synapheia* of two persons would have been rejected by Nestorius too.

4) Hermeneutics: Why the Orthodox opposed any duality is explained now. The Catholics in their formulation of the faith, however, want to emphasise the preservation of properties and not to harm the unity of the subject. The following passage is especially important and deserves to be emphasised. There is an explanation how the (Oriental) Orthodox understand the term 'physis' (nature), and now it is understandable why they speak of one nature in Christ. And vice versa, the Catholics explain what they mean with the formula of Jesus Christ as the "one in two natures." In this declaration it might be understood—while including the confession of the one faith in the whole text—that there is an acceptance of the formulation of the partner in the dialogue.

5) Soteriological implications: The last passage is dealing with these aspects. Redemption is possible only through God. Because there is an indissoluble union in Christ, the divinity did not leave the humanity and this was not even possible. The real divinity and humanity in Christ are interpreted with reference to the eucharist and Easter. The last sentence links again faith and economy of salvation.

Comment: The strength of this text is, in my opinion, that there is a clear explication about the understanding of the controversial opinions of each of the partners. In my opinion there is a hermeneutic here and the fruit of the dialogue becomes visible: you can learn from the arguments and the objections of your partner in the dialogue where there is a—perhaps hidden, or not realised—danger in your own tradition. The partners in this dialogue explain and, by this act, they translate their own tradition to the respective other.

The declaration thus values the *mia physis* formula and the two natures' formula in the framework of a given interpretation, without mutual accusation of a heresy. This is possible because there is a clear recognition of the true incarnation of God in Christ, the only Son of God in true divinity and true humanity. The mutual basic concepts and formulas are made transparent. A commentary of Grillmeier in 1986/1987: "In view of the long struggle from 451 to the end of the patristic period, we can accord historical significance to such a document."<sup>26</sup>

---

26 Grillmeier, *Christ in Christian Tradition*, 2/1.335, n. 48.

## 2.2 *Doctrinal Agreement on Christology 1990 with Malankara Orthodox Syrian Church*

The agreement<sup>27</sup> reached by the official dialogue commission at the first meeting in Kottayam 1989 was approved by the heads of the respective churches and published on Pentecost 1990. It has nine paragraphs:

- 1) Common ground: “in the one, holy, catholic and apostolic faith, held by the one and undivided Church of the early centuries, the faith in Christ always affirmed by both sides.”
- 2) Thanks to God for the dialogue.
- 3) The aim of the ‘brief statement’ is stated as being “to express our common understanding of, and our common witness to the great and saving mystery of Our Lord Jesus Christ, the Word of God incarnate;” reference is made to the “painstaking documentation and detailed discussions held at an unofficial level by our theologians during the past twenty-five years.”
- 4) Christological explanation (I):

Jesus Christ, Our Lord and Saviour, the eternal Logos of God, the Second Person of the Most Holy Trinity, who for us and for our salvation came down from heaven and was incarnate by the Holy Spirit from the Blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of God. We believe that Our Lord Jesus Christ, the Word made flesh, is true God and true man. The Word of God has taken a human body with a rational soul, uniting humanity with divinity.

- 5) Christological explanation (II):

Our Lord Jesus Christ is one, perfect in his humanity and perfect in his divinity—at once consubstantial with the Father in his divinity, and consubstantial with us in his humanity. His humanity is one with his divinity—without change, without commingling, without division and without separation. In the Person of the eternal Logos incarnate are united and active in a real and perfect way the divine and human natures, with all their properties, faculties and operations.

---

<sup>27</sup> *ISPCU* 73 (1990/11), 39.

## 6) Effect of the incarnation (God's revelation):

Divinity was revealed in humanity. The glory of the Father was manifest in the flesh of the Son. We saw the Father's love in the life of the Suffering Servant. The incarnate Lord died on the cross that we may live. He rose again on the third day, and opened for us the way to the Father and to eternal life.

## 7) Effect of the incarnation (human perspective): to become children of God, mystery of the church, renewal of creation:

All who believe in the Son of God and receive him by faith and baptism are given power to become children of God. Through the incarnate Son into whose body they are integrated by the Holy Spirit, they are in communion with the Father and with one another. This is the heart of the mystery of the church, in which and through which the Father by his Holy Spirit renews and reunites the whole creation in Christ. In the church, Christ the Word of God is known, lived, proclaimed and celebrated.

## 8) Within the same faith, expressly stated here, differences in terminology and emphasis can co-exist, but do not separate necessarily:

It is this faith which we both confess. Its content is the same in both communions; in formulating that content in the course of history, however, differences have arisen, in terminology and emphasis. We are convinced that these differences are such as can co-exist in the same communion and therefore need not and should not divide us, especially when we proclaim Him to our brothers and sisters in the world in terms which they can more easily understand.

## 9) Hope of restoration of full communion and removal of all remaining obstacles.

Comment: The common ground is seen in an ecclesiological perspective: the four *notae ecclesiae* (one, holy, catholic, and apostolic) are used to characterise the faith in Christ, and reference is made to the faith of the church, "the one and undivided church of the early centuries." In this way, there is a broad perspective and also confidence that this faith was preserved. The common ground is not specified more closely to the first three councils, or the *mia*

*physis* formula of Cyril of Alexandria. The christological explanation is divided into a first more kerygmatic part in biblical language (4), rather simple and well understandable, and a second part more technical but also well expressed (5). It is not the Formula of Union that is taken up. No technical terminology is used. Incarnation is seen in its soteriological importance and effect for the proclamation of the gospel in today's world. Remarkable is the hope and confidence that terminological differences or emphases can co-exist and are not necessarily separating.

### 3 Oriental Orthodox—Orthodox Dialogue

#### 3.1 "Agreed Statement" of Anba Bishoy Monastery (1989)

The content of the document may be summarised<sup>28</sup> in the following way:

- 1) The one faith and the one apostolic tradition in both churches.
- 2) Fundamental elements ("our common ground") are found in the *mia physis* formula and the Theotokos title for Mary.  
Comment: In fact, the *mia physis* formula was interpreted by some Chalcedonians already in the sixth century (for instance, Ephrem of Antioch) as a confession of two natures (*sesarkomene* as indicating the human nature). However, in this declaration, the common ground is seen differently, compared with the perspective of the declaration of 1976. No hermeneutic is given, how to understand this formula and especially *mia physis*. Besides, the East Syrians (Assyrian Church) would never accept such formulas.
- 3) The mystery of the Trinity in short (there are no problems between the churches).
- 4) The mystery of the incarnation is formulated in a short explanation (double *homoousion* is used) similar to the Formula of Union of 433 and the first (kerygmatic) part of the definition of Chalcedon (this formulation is acceptable also for Chalcedonians).
- 5) Explanation of the term *hypostasis synthetos* (a term of the sixth century) as divino-human being, distinction of the natures only in theory (*en theoria mone*) (this last phrase seems problematic; with it a specific ter-

<sup>28</sup> See n. 20 above. The numbering, following the paragraphs, are mine. For a discussion of the theological problems see de Halleux, "Actualité du néochalcedonisme," 36–54; and idem, "Orthodoxes orientaux en dialogue," *Irénikon* 64 (1991): 339–41 (Anba Bishoy) and 341–45 (Chambésy). Also Winkler, *Koptische Kirche*, 249–54.

minology is prescribed which is not shared by the whole Chalcedonian tradition).<sup>29</sup>

- 6) The concepts of *hypostasis synthetos*, *hypostasis*, *prosopon*, and *physis* are explained.
- 7) The properties of the divine nature including its natural will and its energy are united with the properties of the human nature, including natural will and natural energy. The Logos is subject of all the willing and acting of Jesus Christ.
- 8) Condemnation of the Nestorian and Eutychian heresies.
- 9) The four adverbs belong to the common tradition (here also a hermeneutical passage can be found):

Those among us who speak of two natures in Christ do not thereby deny their inseparable, indivisible union [of these natures]; those among us who speak of one united divine-human nature in Christ do not thereby deny the continuing dynamic presence in Christ of the divine and the human, without change, without confusion.

- 10) “Mutual agreement” concerns the faith of the one undivided church of the early centuries.<sup>30</sup>

### 3.2 “Second Agreed Statement” of Chambésy (1990)

The “Agreed Statement” of 1989 is the basis of this statement,<sup>31</sup> as is expressly stated at the beginning. A structure of the document can be given in the following way:

- 1) Condemnation of Eutyches’ heresy (who did not confess the “consubstantial with us”) in the frame of a soteriological creed.
- 2) Condemnation of Nestorius and (a new element!) of the “crypto-Nestorianism of Theodoret of Cyrus.” The confession of the double

29 See especially André de Halleux, “La distinction des natures du Christ ‘par la seule pensée’ au cinquième concile œcuménique,” in *Persoană și Comuniune: Prinos de cinstire preotului Profesor Academician Dumitru Stăniloae la împlinirea varstei de 90 de ani*, ed. Mircea Păcurariu and Ioan I. Ică Jr. (Sibiu: Ed. Arhiepiscopiei Ortodoxe Sibiu, 1993), 311–18.

30 If one focuses on the christology of the early church, one would hardly speak of the “one undivided church,” even in the early centuries; there have been splits and controversies also in the first centuries, not to speak about the whole millennium. Nevertheless, this terminology might be understood in the sense that those splits did not last till today.

31 See n. 21 above.

*homoousios* is not sufficient, in addition “it is necessary” to confess that the Logos “became by nature man.” (What is problematic is the harsh judgement on Theodoret. The second sentence is very imprecise, in view of the christological discussions in the early centuries).

- 3) The Logos hypostasis became composite (*synthetos*) in the incarnation.
- 4) The natures (with their proper energies and wills) “are united hypostatistically and naturally” and they (the natures) “are distinguished in thought alone” (*en theoria mone*).
- 5) The subject of the will and act is the one hypostasis of the Logos incarnate.
- 6) The norm for the interpretation of the later councils (after Ephesus 431) is given by the union of 433 (*Formula unionis*).
- 7) The Orthodox agree that the Oriental Orthodox continue to use the *mia physis* formula, since the Oriental Orthodox accept the double consubstantiality. The Oriental Orthodox accept the use of the two natures formula by the Orthodox, since the distinction is in thought alone, *en theoria mone*.
- 8) Councils: Both families accept the first three ecumenical councils. The Orthodox interpret the later three in the sense of points 1–7 here. The veneration of icons (Seventh Ecumenical Council) is without disagreement. (This raises the problem of a hermeneutic of councils).
- 9) Conclusion: The same authentic Orthodox faith and unbroken continuity of the apostolic tradition, despite the different usage of christological terms.
- 10) The anathemas and condemnations of the past should be lifted.

From the perspective of a Chalcedonian christology there might be concerns whether it is appropriate that Oriental Orthodox and Eastern Orthodox find their “common ground” in the *mia physis* formula, “the formula of our common Father St Cyril of Alexandria” (in fact, the formula was coined by Apollinarius of Laodicea, but Cyril did not recognise this Apollinarian fraud, which circulated under the name of his venerable predecessor Athanasius of Alexandria). The *mia physis* formula of Cyril is not at all characteristic of the early Cyril.<sup>32</sup> The theological problems of such a basis have been voiced already by André de Halleux in several articles in 1990, 1991, and 1993. In the Fifth Ecumenical Council of Constantinople (553) the definition of Chalcedon was still the norm of understanding, how to interpret the *mia physis* formula. The balanced syntheses of Alexandrian and Antiochene theology by theo-

32 In this regard see the study of Hans van Loon, *The Dyophysite Christology of Cyril of Alexandria*, Supplements to *Vigiliae Christianae*, vol. 96 (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2009).

logians like Maximus Confessor or John of Damascus have not been under consideration when these declarations came into being. The “Second Agreed Statement” is astonishing in its harsh judgement on Theodoret of Cyrus and several imprecise expressions. It is true that the concept of *en theoria mone* was adopted in Constantinople II (can. 7), “but with limitations which Cyril not yet applied.” Because in Constantinople II, the fundamental distinction of *physis* and *hypostasis* is a presupposition, “‘the only according to theoria or thought’ was intended to exclude the real separation or idiohypostasis of Christ’s humanity.”<sup>33</sup>

In 1993 a further meeting in Chambésy was held dealing with practical consequences. Because some questions and concerns have been raised by some Orthodox churches, these agreed statements as a whole wait for reception. Not knowing precisely the objections of other churches, I see the problem that the common tradition is reduced to a christology of a specific leaning (Neo-Chalcedonianism).<sup>34</sup>

#### 4 Reformed—Oriental Orthodox Dialogue (1994)

The “Report of the International Theological Dialogue between the Oriental Orthodox Family of Churches and the World Alliance of Reformed Churches” of 2001 provides an introduction to the “Agreed Statement on Christology,” issued at Driebergen in September 1994, included in the report. The “Agreed Statement” is structured in five paragraphs (14–18), followed by a conclusion saying that, “we recognize the mystery of God’s act in Christ and seek to express that we have shared the same authentic christological faith in the one incarnate Lord.”<sup>35</sup> Its content:

- o) Introduction (13): The Formula of Union (433) was in the focus of consideration.
- 1 and 2) The first two paragraphs (14 and 15) of the “Agreed Statement” quote the Formula of Union literally.

33 Grillmeier, *Christ in Christian Tradition*, 2/2.458. See also the analysis of de Halleux, “La distinction des natures,” 311–18.

34 See Theresia Hainthaler, “Neo-Chalcedonianism as Solution in the Dialogues Today?,” *Christian Orient* 27 (2006): 132–40, with remarks on the document of Anba Bishoy (1989) and of Chambésy (1990).

35 “Agreed Statement on Christology,” 19 (Gros et al., *Growth in Agreement III*, 42).



- 3) The third paragraph (16) correctly affirms that the four adverbs belong to the common christological tradition. There is also a hermeneutical clause regarding the language of one (“united divine-human”) nature or two natures:

Those among us who speak of two natures in Christ are justified in doing so since they do not thereby deny their inseparable, indivisible union; similarly, those among us who speak of one united divine-human nature in Christ are justified in doing so since they do not thereby deny the continuing dynamic presence in Christ of the divine and the human, without change, without confusion.<sup>36</sup>

- 4) The fourth paragraph rejects any separation of divine and human nature and a commixtion by which the human nature would be absorbed by the divine.
- 5) At the end (18) the soteriological importance of “the perfect union of divinity and of humanity in the incarnate Word” is expressed.

The “Agreed Statement” is clear and correct. Probably, different opinions regarding scripture and tradition, and above all, concerning ministry and priesthood, may have prevented further steps in its reception.

## 5 Anglican—Oriental Orthodox Dialogue (2002)

The “Agreed Statement on Christology” of the dialogue commission of 10 November 2002 in Etchmiadzin has ten paragraphs. The “Agreed Statement on Christology” of 1994 that the Oriental Orthodox concluded with the World Alliance of Reformed Churches and that of 2002 with the Anglican Communion are parallel in the first four numbers.<sup>37</sup> In addition, item 18 of the former is taken up as 8 in the latter, and instead of KJV now the NRSV version is used. Obviously, the agreement with the World Alliance of Reformed Churches of 1994 was at the basis for the agreement with the Anglican Communion in 2002, although modified with some additions and changes.

The Anglican—Oriental Orthodox statement is structured in this way:

<sup>36</sup> Ibid., 16 (Gros et al., *Growth in Agreement III*, 42).

<sup>37</sup> Ibid., 14, 15, 16, and 17 (Gros et al., *Growth in Agreement III*, 41–42) = Anglican—Oriental Orthodox International Commission, “Agreed Statement on Christology,” 1, 3, 4, and 5 (Gros et al., *Growth in Agreement III*, 35–37).

- 1) Formula of Union (433) is cited (but only partly, the beginning is shortened to: “who became incarnate und made human”).
- 2) Consequence: based on the common father St Cyril of Alexandria, both confess the continuing existence “without separation, without division, without change, and without confusion” of two different natures with the *mia physis* formula.
- 3) Formula of Union is cited on the *Theotokos* title and the distinction of divine and human in New Testament expressions on the Lord.
- 4) The four adverbs are expressly mentioned and followed by a hermeneutical clause.
- 5) Any division or separation of the divine and human nature in Christ is rejected by both sides, as well as any confusion (absorption of the human into the divine).
- 6) Quotations from Richard Hooker’s *Laws of Ecclesiastical Polity* (5e, 52.3, and 53.2), from the sixteenth century.
- 7) Deals with the Word having a divine will and energy and human will and energy, and claims that the union of natures is natural, hypostatic, real, and perfect, and that distinction in the natures exists in thought alone. The twelfth-century Armenian, Nerses Shnorhali, is quoted concerning the question of the operation of two wills in Christ.
- 8) The statement in the earlier agreement of 1994 (18) is found exactly here (but with the biblical quotation from John 3:16 according to the NRSV), to which is added: “The Son of God emptied himself and became human, absolutely free from sin, in order to transform our sinful humanity to the image of his holiness. This is the gospel we are called to live and proclaim.”<sup>38</sup>
- 9) Concerns of the Oriental Orthodox Churches about the christology of the Assyrian Church of the East (as expressed in its official and unofficial dialogues with other churches).
- 10) Submission to the Authorities.

Comments: Section 2, which is here a new insertion between the two parts of the Formula of Union (433), declares with reference to “our common father St Cyril of Alexandria” that “we can confess together that in the one incarnate nature of the Word of God, two different natures continue to exist,” and this is followed by the four adverbs.<sup>39</sup> It has to be appreciated that the continuing

38 Anglican—Oriental Orthodox International Commission, “Agreed Statement on Christology,” 8 (Gros et al., *Growth in Agreement III*, 37).

39 *Ibid.*, 2 (Gros et al., *Growth in Agreement III*, 36).

existence of the two natures is admitted and that it is possible to speak of two natures (often Copts blocked even to use the plural “natures”). Of course, this is in line with Cyril of Alexandria,<sup>40</sup> who held that there was no negation of the difference of the natures.

The comparison with the 1994 statement shows that in 4 instead of “one united divine-human nature in Christ” the agreement with the Anglican communion has, “one incarnate nature of the Word of God,” that is, the *mia physis* formula is inserted.<sup>41</sup> The affirmation that the four adverbs “belong to our common christological tradition”<sup>42</sup> is left out in the statement of 2002. In 5 we find some additions in the 2002 statement when compared with the 1994 one: at the end of the first sentence, which rejects “limiting the union to the union of persons and thereby denying that the person of Jesus Christ is a single person of God the Word,” “Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today and forever” (Heb 13:8 NRSV) is added.<sup>43</sup> After the second sentence a third is added: “Consequently, we reject both the Nestorian and the Eutychian heresies.”

The quotations from the famous Anglican theologian Richard Hooker<sup>44</sup> († 1600) are the following:

It is not man's ability either to express perfectly or to conceive the manner how (the incarnation) was brought to pass.” “In Christ the verity of God and the complete substance of man were with full agreement established throughout the world, until the time of Nestorius.” The church, Hooker contends, rightly repudiated any division in the person of Christ. “Christ is a Person both divine and human, howbeit not therefore two persons in one, neither both these in one sense, but a Person divine because he is personally the Son of God, human, because he hath really the nature of the children of men” (*Laws* 52.3). “Whereupon it followeth against Nestorius, that no person was born of the Virgin but the Son of

40 See Cyril of Alexandria, *Ep.* 4.3 (= *Ep. ad Nestorium* 2.3) (Eduard Schwartz, ed., *Acta Conciliorum Oecumenicorum*, t. 1: *Concilium Universale Ephesenum*, vol. 1: *Acta Graeca*, pars 1: *Collectio Vaticana* 1–32 [Berlin: De Gruyter, 1927], 27.2–3), where he says: οὐχ ὡς τῆς τῶν φύσεων διαφορὰς ἀνηρημένης διὰ τὴν ἕνωσιν (“for the difference of the natures is not taken away by the union”).

41 Anglican—Oriental Orthodox International Commission, “Agreed Statement on Christology,” 4 (Gros et al., *Growth in Agreement III*, 36).

42 “Agreed Statement on Christology,” 16 (Gros et al., *Growth in Agreement III*, 42).

43 Anglican—Oriental Orthodox International Commission, “Agreed Statement on Christology,” 5 (Gros et al., *Growth in Agreement III*, 36).

44 R. Hooker, *Of the Lawes of Ecclesiasticall Politie Book v* (London: Windet, 1597; reprint: Menston: Scolar Press, 1969), 108, 109, 110, and 111.

God, no person but the Son of God baptized, the Son of God condemned, the Son of God and no other person crucified; which one only point of Christian belief, the infinite worth of the Son of God, is the very ground of all things believed concerning life and salvation by that which Christ either did or suffered as man in our belief"<sup>45</sup> (*Laws*, 52.3). In the following consideration of the teaching of St Cyril, Hooker maintains, both the importance of St Cyril's insistence on the unity of the person of Christ while repudiating any Eutychian interpretation of that unity. Hooker quotes with approval Cyril's letter to Nestorius:<sup>46</sup> "His two natures have knit themselves the one to the other, and are in that nearness as incapable of confusion as of distraction. Their coherence hath not taken away the difference between them. Flesh is not become God but doth still continue flesh, although it be now the flesh of God" (*Laws* 53.2).<sup>47</sup>

The context of the quotations from Hooker is left out which in fact is the explanation of the doctrine of Chalcedon and the Tome of Leo. Besides, the quotations are chosen from passages critical of Nestorius. Of course, Hooker wrote without knowledge of *Liber Heraclidis* of Nestorius, rediscovered only at the end of the nineteenth century and published in 1910, and also not knowing modern research on it.<sup>48</sup>

In 9 it is without precedence to mention a third partner in the bilateral dialogue: "We also note the concerns of the Oriental Orthodox churches about the Christology of the Assyrian Church of the East as expressed in its official and unofficial dialogues with other churches. A particular concern of the Oriental

45 The original of Hooker, *Of the Lawes of Ecclesiasticall Politie* 1597, 110, has "in our behalf," instead of "in our belief;" this latter expression seems to be an error.

46 Which letter of Cyril to Nestorius is quoted by Hooker, *Of the Lawes of Ecclesiasticall Politie* 111? There is to my mind no literal coincidence of the quotation with letters of Cyril to Nestorius, but some similarities to *Ep.* 4.3 (= *Ep. ad Nestorium* 2.3) (*ACO* 1.1.1.26–27). The phrasing is close to Cyril's *Ep.* 45 (= *Ep. ad Successum* 1) (Eduard Schwartz, ed., *Acta Conciliorum Oecumenicorum*, t. 1: *Concilium Universale Ephesenum*, vol. 1: *Acta Graeca*, pars 6: *Collectio Vaticana 165–172* [Berlin: De Gruyter, 1928], 153.16–20, but no total conformity. The statement would hardly be scandalising for Nestorius (besides the formulation "God's flesh"). Immediately after, Hooker deals with approval Leo's "Salva proprietate utriusque naturae" of his Tome, so much rejected by the Copts.

47 Anglican—Oriental Orthodox International Commission, "Agreed Statement on Christology," 6 (Gros et al., *Growth in Agreement* III, 36–37).

48 See the report on research of Luise Abramowski, "The History of Research into Nestorius," in *Syriac Dialogue: First Non-Official Consultation on Dialogue within the Syriac Tradition* (Vienna: Pro Oriente, 1994), 54–65 (some errors in the printing!).

Orthodox is that the Assyrians consider the persons and teachings of Diodore of Tarsus, Theodore of Mopsuestia and Nestorius as orthodox and thus venerate them in the liturgies of their church.<sup>49</sup> Since there have been unofficial dialogues in the framework of Pro Oriente (“Syriac Dialogue,” 1994–2004) and the official dialogue with the Roman Catholic Church—to my knowledge there are no other dialogues—these might be addressed. Problematic is the obligation that the Anglicans have “to take into account these Oriental Orthodox theological reservations in any further christological work with the Assyrian Church of the East” and that the “result of any such discussions will have to be evaluated . . . in the light of this christological agreement.”<sup>50</sup>

## 6 Catholic—Assyrian Dialogue

In Rome, on 11 November 1994, a “Common Christological Declaration”<sup>51</sup> was signed by Pope John Paul II and Catholicos-Patriarch of the Assyrian Church of the East, Mar Dinkha IV, which can be structured in the following way (the numbers are mine):

### I. Introduction (1–2)

1. Thanks to God for the new meeting
2. Importance: Basic step for the way to full communion. Central message: “from now on, [they can] proclaim together their common faith in the mystery of the incarnation.”

### II. Christological part (3–7)

3. Christ’s coming to earth
4. Ontological statements on Christ
5. Against heresies; the Marian titles *Christotokos* and *Theotokos*
6. Conclusion: one faith in Christ. Looking back into the past
7. Again: the same faith in the Son of God. Future witness together

49 Anglican—Oriental Orthodox International Commission, “Agreed Statement on Christology,” 9 (Gros et al., *Growth in Agreement III*, 37).

50 Ibid., 10 (Gros et al., *Growth in Agreement III*, 37–38).

51 “Common Christological Declaration between the Catholic Church and the Assyrian Church of the east,” (11 November 1994), in Gros et al., *Growth in Agreement II*, 711–12.

### III. Ecclesiological part (8–11)

8. Transition: importance of christology for ecclesiology
9. Sacraments: baptism, anointing, eucharist, forgiveness, and ordination
10. Recognition as sister churches, but no eucharistic communion
11. Common witness to the faith, pastoral cooperation (especially catechesis and formation of future priests)

### IV. Conclusion (12)

Thanks to God for rediscovering the uniting elements in faith and sacraments.

Commitment to dispel the obstacles in view of the Lord's call for unity.

Establish a mixed committee for theological dialogue.

The christological part (3–7) can be analysed in the following manner. It starts with Christ's coming (3):

As heirs and guardians of the faith received from the apostles as formulated by our common fathers in the Nicene Creed, we confess one Lord Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, begotten of the Father from all eternity who, in the fullness of time, came down from heaven and became man for our salvation.

Thus, this section refers first of all to the apostolic tradition and the Nicene creed (more precisely, it is the creed of 381, which is quoted immediately after), a kerygmatic statement which shows similarities with the Formula of Union of 433 (and therefore also with the first part of the Definition of Chalcedon where the Formula of Union is taken up). The Nicene Creed was received at the Synod of Persian bishops in 410.

The second sentence offers a theological explanation: "The Word of God, second Person of the Holy Trinity, became incarnate by the power of the Holy Spirit in assuming from the holy Virgin Mary a body animated by a rational soul, with which he was indissolubly united from the moment of his conception." The terminology of the *unus ex trinitate*, one of the Trinity, is found in Proclus of Constantinople (434–446) (in his *Tomus ad Armenios*), and became later in connection with *crucifixus* or *passus est* the shibboleth of the Anti-Chalcedonians. At the beginning of the sixth century, Scythian monks from the Danube region propagated the use of the formula, first in Constantinople and, after having been dismissed there, also in Rome. There too their request

was not reciprocated. But the addition was made: *una persona*. After some discussions and at the request of emperor Justinian the formula finally was approved by Pope John 11 on 25 March 534.<sup>52</sup> It was of high importance for the Antiochian school that God's transcendence was not violated by ascribing passion or change to the divinity. The Assyrian Church follows the tradition of the strict Antiochenes. But Babai the Great (d. 628) (in his *De unione* 2.6) wrote that the union is of one of the hypostases of the Trinity with the nature of our manhood; also for Catholicos Timothy I, the Great, it was no problem to speak of the *unus ex trinitate*. The terminology of assuming a body (animated by a rational soul) is clearly opposing Apollinarius; "to assume" is Antiochian terminology, based on Philippians 2:7. The explanation is a combination of the key passages of the Alexandrian and Antiochian traditions by its formulation: the Logos became flesh (incarnate) by assuming a body.

Emphasis is placed on the fact that it is a union from the very moment of conception. Thus any interpretation meaning the assumption of an already existing human being is excluded. This is an indissoluble unity. Such a statement is rooted in the East Syrian tradition.

The following passage (4) seems to answer this question: what is Christ?, and presents theological consequences regarding Christ's essence and being. He is a) true God and true man, b) perfect in his divinity and perfect in his humanity, c) consubstantial with the Father and consubstantial with us in all things but sin, and d) his divinity and his humanity are united in one person, without confusion or change, without division or separation. There is no mention of 'natures' (thus the quarrel about the terminology of the *qnome* is avoided), the abstract nouns (divinity, humanity) are used. All these statements can be found also in the definition of Chalcedon. Also the four adverbs are mentioned here.

Important is the statement (found in Chalcedon and in Cyril, also in the Tome of Leo): "in him has been preserved the difference of the natures of divinity and humanity." The continuation: "with all their properties, faculties and operations," goes beyond the sixth century and addresses already Constantinople III (680/1). The formulation is diplomatic, since the Assyrians have the confession of one will; but the context here is the distinction of the natures.

Then follows the warding off of the heresy of two subjects (*ἄλλος καὶ ἄλλος*), followed by returning to the unity: "But far from constituting 'one and another', the divinity and humanity are united in the person of the same and unique Son of God and Lord Jesus Christ, who is the object of a single adoration." Such a

52 See Grillmeier, *Christ in Christian Tradition*, 2/2.317–43.

statement is standard in the Antiochian tradition, and also directed against the reproach of venerating two sons (often said against ‘Nestorians’). The whole formulation is concise without technical terms and expresses the essential and common elements. The Catholics can understand here the hypostatic union, the unity in the hypostasis of the Logos, the Assyrians may have in mind the “*prosopon of filiation*.”

In 5 an adoptionist christology is rejected. Expressly it affirms that the humanity born by Mary was always that of the Son of God himself (such a wording is found in the work of Catholicos Timothy I).<sup>53</sup> On this basis the titles *Christotokos* and *Theotokos* are used in prayers and liturgy:

The humanity to which the Blessed Virgin Mary gave birth always was that of the Son of God himself. That is the reason why the Assyrian Church of the East is praying the Virgin Mary as ‘the Mother of Christ our God and Saviour’. In the light of this same faith the Catholic tradition addresses the Virgin Mary as ‘the Mother of God’ and also as ‘the Mother of Christ’.

It is of great importance that the mutual recognition is expressed with the following words: “We both recognize the legitimacy and rightness of these expressions of the same faith and we both respect the preference of each Church in her liturgical life and piety.”

The conclusion of the christological part (6) states: “This is the unique faith that we profess in the mystery of Christ.” The anathemas of the past are mentioned. The divisions brought about “were due in large part to misunderstandings.” Finally (in 7) the aim of the future is to witness together to this faith to the contemporary world.

Comment: The text takes into consideration the patristic tradition, but avoids the crucial terms *hypostasis* and *prosopon*—which are differently understood in the respective churches. ‘Nature’ is used only once (4: “difference of the natures of divinity and humanity”), but elsewhere the document speaks of ‘divinity’ or ‘humanity’. The declaration expresses the centre of the christological faith with a minimum of technical terminology. It does not always use kerygmatic language, yet a rather simple wording that is correct—despite the complex historical developments. It would be problematic to use a totally new language and loose the link to tradition, a constituent element of Eastern and Oriental Orthodox churches.

---

53 See Theresia Hainthaler, “Christ in the flesh, who is God over all (Rom 9,5 Pesh.): The Letter of Catholicos Timothy I (780–823) to the Monks of Mār Māron,” *The Harp* 29 (2014): 86–7.



A short and very precise wording offers the basis for the recognition of the controversial Marian title. The whole explanation in 3–4 is a solid fundament and at the same time a hermeneutic how to understand christological faith. The common basis became clear, in doing justice to the theological tradition of the patristic times, that is, the time when the schism started.

## 7 Concluding Remarks

As a whole, it is obvious that the Formula of Union (433) was used in many cases. Often we find a hermeneutical clause explaining mutually the meaning of the own terminology. This gives a framework of interpretation in order to overcome the condemnation of the past. Implicitly there is also an expression to accept the partner's understanding (within the limits of the given explanation).

### 7.1 *The Declaration of 1976 (Coptic—Catholic)*

I join the judgement of Grillmeier and would appreciate the text. However, later, in 1988 a “short christological formula” was accepted which is rooted in the Coptic tradition; the implicit recognition (that Chalcedon is not a heretical aberration—as the Copts have been taught so long—but might be understood correctly) in the declaration of 1976 was somehow lost.

### 7.2 *Declaration of 1990 (Malankara—Catholic)*

It seems that this is a well formulated declaration, based also on biblical terms and with a broad soteriological perspective, understandable for the faithful. Interesting is the statement (8), that the “content” of the faith “is the same in both communions” and “differences . . . . in terminology and emphasis . . . can co-exist . . . and should not divide us.”

### 7.3 *Declarations of 1989 and 1990 (Orthodox—Oriental Orthodox)*

On the one hand it is welcome that there is a deeper reflection on the technical terms, on the other hand, weaknesses and imprecision are obvious. Such difficulties might have hindered the reception (not only an overall anti-ecumenical attitude). A specific interpretation of Chalcedon is imposed which is not shared by all Chalcedonians.

### 7.4 *Declaration of 1994 (Reformed—Oriental Orthodox)*

Based on the Formula of Union, a clear declaration is given, with a hermeneutical clause.

### 7.5 *Declaration of 2002 (Anglican—Oriental Orthodox)*

Based on the declaration of 1994 (with the Reformed), with some shortening and additional phrases (emphasising the Coptic view), new paragraphs with quotations from the work of the Anglican theologian Hooker and the concerns against a third church, the Assyrian, have been added. These additions are questionable in different respects.

### 7.6 *Declaration of 1994 (Assyrian—Catholic)*

From a Chalcedonian and a dogmatic perspective this is a well-done declaration. That this declaration is rather balanced is underlined by the fact that the Coptic Orthodox Church was able to draft a similar christological declaration with the Assyrian Church in January 1995.<sup>54</sup> The christological agreement was the basis for the dialogue process in the years 1995–2004 until the dialogue was interrupted (because of the controversy on the leading bishop Mar Bawai of the ecumenical affairs and his suspension); there is some hope that it might be resumed in the future.

### 7.7 *Declaration of 2014 (Anglican—Oriental Orthodox)*

A revised “Agreed Statement on Christology” (with ten paragraphs) was signed on 15 October 2014 in Cairo, Egypt. The “slight revisions” (mentioned in the introduction at paragraph three) with regard to the declaration of Etchmiadzin (2002) are the following, except some slight changes in the wording of the Formula of Union of 433 (in no. 1) and minor changes in nos 3 and 5: there is an addition [...] in no. 2 to the former version of 2002 and the formulation is now: “two different natures [distinguished in thought alone] continue to exist without separation, without division, without change, and without confusion.” The wording “distinguished in thought alone” is repeated in no. 8 (former no. 7). In no. 6 (on the Anglican tradition) now the 39 articles of 1563 and especially article II are mentioned additionally to Hooker. Then follows a new no. 7, dealing with the terms ‘monophysite’ or ‘miaphysite’ for the christology of the Oriental Orthodox. While ‘monophysite’ is called “both misleading and offensive as it implies Eutychianism,” the term ‘miaphysite’ is accepted as an “accurate term” referring to the Cyrilline teaching of the Oriental Orthodox family. It is to be welcomed that the problematic paragraph (no. 9) against the Assyrians now is omitted. No. 10 remains.

---

54 This Coptic—Assyrian declaration however was never received, due to reasons which are not rooted in the text.

## Bibliography

- Council of Chalcedon. *Definitio fidei* (Eduard Schwartz, ed., *Acta Conciliorum Oecumenicorum*, t. 2: *Concilium Universale Chalcedonense*, vol. 1: *Acta Graeca*, pars 2: *Actio secunda. Epistularum Collectio B. Actiones III–VII* [Berlin: De Gruyter, 1933], 128–30).
- Cyril of Alexandria. *Ep. 4* (= *Ep. ad Nestorium 2*) (Eduard Schwartz, ed., *Acta Conciliorum Oecumenicorum*, t. 1: *Concilium Universale Ephesenum*, vol. 1: *Acta Graeca*, pars 1: *Collectio Vaticana 1–32* [Berlin: De Gruyter, 1927], 25–28).
- . *Ep. 45* (= *Ep. ad Successum*) (Eduard Schwartz, ed., *Acta Conciliorum Oecumenicorum*, t. 1: *Concilium Universale Ephesenum*, vol. 1: *Acta Graeca*, pars 6: *Collectio Vaticana 165–172* [Berlin: De Gruyter, 1928], 151–7).
- Eustathius. *Epistula de duabus naturis* (J.H. Declerck and Pauline Allen, eds, *Pamphilus theologus. Diuersorum capitum seu difficultatum solutio; Eustathius monachus. Epistula de duabus naturis*, CCG, vol. 19. Leuven: Turnhout, 1989).
- Philoxenus of Mabbog. *Letter to the Monks of Senoun* (A. de Halleux, ed., *Philoxène de Mabbog. Lettre aux moines de Senoun*, CSCO, vols 231 and 232 = CSCO, *Scriptores Syri*, vols 98 and 99. Leuven: Peeters, 1963).
- Severus of Antioch. *Homiliae XLVI–LI* (M. Brière and F. Graffin, eds, *Les Homiliae Cathedrales de Sévère d'Antioche. Traduction syriaque de Jacques d'Édesse*, PO, vol. 35/3. Turnhout: Brepols, 1969).
- Anglican–Oriental Orthodox International Commission, “Agreed Statement on Christology,” (10 November 2002). In *Growth in Agreement III: International Dialogue Texts and Agreed Statements 1998–2005*, edited by Jeffrey Gros, Thomas F. Best, and Lorelei F. Fuchs, Faith and Order Paper n. 204, 35–38. Geneva: World Council of Churches, 2007.
- “Common Christological Declaration between the Catholic Church and the Assyrian Church of the East,” (11 November 1994). In *Growth in Agreement II: Reports and Agreed Statements of Ecumenical Conversations on a World Level, 1982–1998*, edited by Jeffrey Gros, Harding Meyer, and William G. Rusch, Faith and Order Paper no. 187, 711–12. Geneva: World Council of Churches, 2000.
- “Common Declaration of Pope John Paul II and Catholicos Karekin I,” (13 December 1996). In *Growth in Agreement II: Reports and Agreed Statements of Ecumenical Conversations on a World Level, 1982–1998*, edited by Jeffrey Gros, Harding Meyer, and William G. Rusch, Faith and Order Paper no. 187, 707–708. Geneva: World Council of Churches, 2000.
- “Common Declaration of Pope John Paul II and Catholicos Aram I Keshishian,” (25 January 1997) ([http://www.vatican.va/roman\\_curia/pontifical\\_councils/chrstuni/anc-orient-ch-docs/rc\\_pc\\_christuni\\_doc\\_19970125\\_jp-ii-aram-i\\_en.html](http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/pontifical_councils/chrstuni/anc-orient-ch-docs/rc_pc_christuni_doc_19970125_jp-ii-aram-i_en.html)).

- “Common Declaration of Pope John Paul II and His Holiness Mar Ignatius Zakka I Iwas,” (23 June 1984). In *Growth in Agreement II: Reports and Agreed Statements of Ecumenical Conversations on a World Level, 1982–1998*, edited by Jeffrey Gros, Harding Meyer, and William G. Rusch, Faith and Order Paper no. 187, 691–3. Geneva: World Council of Churches, 2000.
- “Common Declaration by Pope Paul VI and His Holiness Mar Ignatius Iacob III” (27 October 1971) ([www.vatican.va/roman\\_curia/pontifical\\_councils/chrstuni/anc-orient-ch-docs/rc\\_pc\\_christuni\\_doc\\_19711025\\_syrian-church\\_en.html](http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/pontifical_councils/chrstuni/anc-orient-ch-docs/rc_pc_christuni_doc_19711025_syrian-church_en.html)).
- “Common Declaration of Pope Paul VI and of the Pope of Alexandria Shenouda III” (10 May 1973) ([www.vatican.va/roman\\_curia/pontifical\\_councils/chrstuni/anc-orient-ch-docs/re\\_pc\\_christuni\\_doc\\_19730510\\_copti\\_en.html](http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/pontifical_councils/chrstuni/anc-orient-ch-docs/re_pc_christuni_doc_19730510_copti_en.html)).
- “Common Report” (of the Third Meeting of the International Commission between the Catholic Church and the Coptic Orthodox Church, August 26th–29th, 1976). In *ISPCU* 76 (1991/1) 19–21.
- Orthodox—Eastern Orthodox Joint Commission, “Communique,” (24 June 1989). In *Growth in Agreement II: Reports and Agreed Statements of Ecumenical Conversations on a World Level, 1982–1998*, edited by Jeffrey Gros, Harding Meyer, and William G. Rusch, Faith and Order Paper no. 187, 191–3. Geneva: World Council of Churches, 2000.
- . “Second Agreed Statement and Recommendations to the Churches,” (28 September 1990). In *Growth in Agreement II: Reports and Agreed Statements of Ecumenical Conversations on a World Level, 1982–1998*, edited by Jeffrey Gros, Harding Meyer, and William G. Rusch, Faith and Order Paper no. 187, 194–9. Geneva: World Council of Churches, 2000.
- Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity. “The Roman Catholic Church and the Coptic Orthodox Church. Documents (1973–1988).” In *ISPCU* 76 (1991/1), 14–21 and 26–30.
- “Report of the International Theological Dialogue between the Oriental Orthodox Family of Churches and the World Alliance of Reformed Churches (1993–2001).” In *Growth in Agreement III: International Dialogue Texts and Agreed Statements 1998–2005*, edited by Jeffrey Gros, Thomas F. Best, and Lorelei F. Fuchs, Faith and Order Paper no. 204, 39–59. Geneva: World Council of Churches, 2007.
- “Statement of the Joint Commission between the Roman Catholic Church and the Malankara Orthodox Syrian Church,” (3 June 1990). In *Growth in Agreement II: Reports and Agreed Statements of Ecumenical Conversations on a World Level, 1982–1998*, edited by Jeffrey Gros, Harding Meyer, and William G. Rusch, Faith and Order Paper no. 187, 696–7. Geneva: World Council of Churches, 2000.
- Abramowski, Luise. “The History of Research into Nestorius.” In *Syriac Dialogue: First Non-Official Consultation on Dialogue within the Syriac Tradition*, 54–65. Vienna: Pro Oriente, 1994.

- Allen, Pauline. "Monophysitismus." In *TRE*, Bd 23: *Minucius Felix—Name/Namensgebung*, 219–33. Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1994.
- , Albert Van Roey. *Monophysite Texts of the Sixth Century*, OLA, vol. 56. Leuven: Peeters, 1994.
- Allen, Pauline, and C.T.R. Hayward. *Severus of Antioch*, The Early Church Fathers. London and New York: Routledge, 2004.
- Grillmeier, Alois. *Jesus der Christus im Glauben der Kirche*, Bd 1. Freiburg: Herder, 1979.
- . *Christ in Christian Tradition*, vol. 2: *From the Council of Chalcedon (451) to Gregory the Great*, part 1: *Reception and Contradiction. The Development of the Discussion about Chalcedon from 451 to the Beginning of the Reign of Justinian*, trans. Pauline Allen and John Cawte. London: A.R. Mowbray, 1987.
- Grillmeier, Alois, with Theresia Hainthaler. *Christ in Christian Tradition*, vol. 2: *From the Council of Chalcedon (451) to Gregory the Great (590–604)*, part 2: *The Church of Constantinople in the Sixth Century*, trans. Pauline Allen and John Cawte. London: Westminster John Knox Press, 1995.
- Hainthaler, Theresia, ed. *Christ in Christian Tradition*, vol. 2: *From the Council of Chalcedon (451) to Gregory the Great (590–604)*, part 3: *The Churches of Jerusalem and Antioch from 451 to 600*, with contributions by Alois Grillmeier, Theresia Hainthaler, Tanios Bou Mansour, Luise Abramowski, trans. Marianne Ehrhardt. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013.
- . "Entwicklungen im Dialog der orientalisches-orthodoxen Kirchen." *Materialdienst des Konfessionskundlichen Instituts Bensheim* 57 (2006), 15–18.
- . "Neo-Chalcedonianism as Solution in the Dialogues Today?" *Christian Orient* 27 (2006): 132–40.
- . "A Short Analysis of the Definition of Chalcedon and Some Reflections." *The Harp* 20 (2006): 317–31.
- . "Die Gemeinsame Erklärung vom 23. Juni 1984. Theologische Aussage und ökumenische Bedeutung." In *Gemeinsamer Glaube und pastorale Zusammenarbeit. 25 Jahre Weggemeinschaft zwischen der Syrisch-Orthodoxen Kirche und der Römisch-Katholischen Kirche*, edited by J. Oeldemann, Epiphania Egregia, Bd 6, 24–51. Basel: Reinhardt Friedrich Verlag, 2011.
- . "Christ in the flesh, who is God over all (Rom 9,5 Pesch): The Letter of Catholicos Timothy I (780–823) to the Monks of Mār Māron." *The Harp* 29 (2014): 73–96.
- Halleux, André de. "Actualité du néochalcédonisme. Un accord christologique récent entre Orthodoxes." *RTL* 21 (1990): 32–54.
- . "Orthodoxes orientaux en dialogue," *Irénikon* 64 (1991): 332–57.
- . "La distinction des natures du Christ 'par la seule pensée' au cinquième concile oecuménique." In *Persoană și Comuniune: Prinos de cinștire preotului Profesor*

- Academician Dumitru Stăniloae la implinirea varstei de 90 de ani*, edited by Mircea Păcurariu and Ioan I. Ică Jr., 311–18. Sibiu: Ed. Arhiepiscopiei Ortodoxe Sibiu, 1993.
- Hooker, R. *Of the Lawes of Ecclesiasticall Politie Books 1–v*. London: Windet, 1594–1597. Reprint: Menston: Scolar Press, 1969.
- Loon, Hans van. *The Dyophysite Christology of Cyril of Alexandria*, Supplements to *Vigiliae Christianae*, vol. 96. Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2009.
- Ortiz de Urbina, J. “Das Symbol von Chalkedon. Sein Text, sein Werden, seine dogmatische Bedeutung.” In *Das Konzil von Chalkedon: Geschichte und Gegenwart*, Bd 1: *Der Glaube von Chalkedon*, edited by Alois Grillmeier and Heinrich Bacht, 389–418. Würzburg: Echter-Verlag, 1951.
- Winkler, Dietmar W. *Koptische Kirche und Reichskirche. Altes Schisma und neuer Dialog*, ITS, vol. 48. Innsbruck: Tyrolia Verlagsanstalt, 1997.
- . *Ostsyrisches Christentum. Untersuchungen zu Christologie, Ekklesiologie und zu den ökumenischen Beziehungen der Assyrischen Kirche des Ostens*, Studien zur Orientalischen Kirchengeschichte, Bd 26. Münster: LIT, 2003.
- Wright, J. Robert. “La signification des quatre adverbs chalcédoniens dans des accords œcuméniques récents.” *Irénikon* 71 (1998): 5–16.

# ‘Historical Development’ and Early Christianity: George Tyrrell’s Modernist Adaptation and Critique

*Elizabeth A. Clark*

## 1 Introduction

In the first years of the twentieth century, some liberal Roman Catholics embraced the notion that Christianity from its earliest times had ‘developed’. This view, which seems so uncontroversial now, countered traditional Catholic teaching that a ‘deposit of faith’ had been handed down, unchanged, from Jesus through the apostles to their successors: only variations of form and verbal expression over time, not of content, could be countenanced. The then-burgeoning scholarship on early Christianity, largely by German Protestants, had scarcely penetrated Vatican circles. In mid-nineteenth-century Rome, John Henry Newman—to whom we shall return—found the ecclesiastics he encountered “almost wholly ignorant of historical scholarship.”<sup>1</sup> Among Catholic theologians who foresaw what the new historical studies of Christian origins might portend, George Tyrrell was prominent.

Born in Dublin, Tyrrell in his adolescence converted from (a lapsed) Protestantism to Catholicism. He immediately entered the Society of Jesus,<sup>2</sup> a decision he later regretted. At the time, he imagined that the Jesuits’ rigorous demand for submission of judgement would be good for him, given (as he put it) his “dangerously analytical habit of mind.”<sup>3</sup> In seminary, Tyrrell

1 Owen Chadwick, *From Bossuet to Newman: The Idea of Doctrinal Development* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1957), 167.

2 Maude Petre, *Autobiography and Life of George Tyrrell*, 2 vols (London: Edward Arnold, 1912), vol. 1, ch. 10. Vol. 1 is based on Tyrrell’s memoir of his early life; vol. 2 was composed by Petre, incorporating numerous letters and reports of conversations. For assessments and cautions see Nicholas Sagovsky, “On God’s Side”: *A Life of George Tyrrell* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1990), vii–viii; Thomas M. Loome, “George Tyrrell: ‘Revelation as Experience,’” *Hey!* 12.2 (April 1971): 124, n. 4 (a lecture by Tyrrell at King’s College, London, 26 March 1909 [117]). For Tyrrell’s intellectual and religious development up to 1906 see David G. Schultenover, *George Tyrrell: In Search of Catholicism* (Shepherdstown, WV: Patmos Press, 1981), whose work remains unsurpassed.

3 Petre, *Autobiography and Life*, 1.203.

received little training in early Christian history and scripture; the curriculum was devoted mainly to philosophy and theology.<sup>4</sup> Tyrrell bitterly (and rather dramatically) confessed in 1902 that he had had to unlearn all the Jesuits had taught him: he was struggling to “fill up the appalling lacunae in my education caused by ten years . . . waste in the best part of my life.”<sup>5</sup>

Maude Petre, Tyrrell's biographer, patron, friend, and fellow-Modernist, confessed that assimilating the new critical history had “caused us many a heartache.”<sup>6</sup> “Our first questionings of the principles of established authority may be painful,” she wrote, “but they cannot rend the soul as do those which regard the most vital facts of our religious life and belief.”<sup>7</sup> Historical criticism, Petre mused, seemed “terrifying” for traditional Catholics, perhaps the most terrifying development since Copernicus' theories.<sup>8</sup> Tyrrell shared those heartaches and soul-rending pain as he laboured to confront the new historico-critical scholarship.

Tyrrell's gradual embrace of ‘historical development’ radically challenged traditional Catholic understandings of the Vincentian canon (that the church's doctrine had been held “always, everywhere, and by all”). Earlier, Tyrrell admits, he had “uncritically accepted” the notion of an unchanging ‘deposit of faith.’<sup>9</sup> Under *that* rubric, ‘development’ was understood only as ‘explication’, by which earlier ‘confused’ knowledge emerged in more distinct form. This rubric he now deemed inadequate. That view of the ‘deposit’, Tyrrell later wryly wrote, assumes that

all the *Majors* and *Minors* of modern Catholicism were revealed to St. Peter and passed on to St. Linus, who, had he been Socratically [*sic*] interrogated about any of the dogmas or Sacraments, would have answered in substantially the same way as a D.D. of the Gregorian University.<sup>10</sup>

4 Ibid., 1.276 and 267.

5 Tyrrell to Henri Bremond, 14 April, 1902 (Fonds Bremond, Bibliothèque Nationale, Nouvelles acquisitions françaises), cited in Schultenover, *George Tyrrell*, 256.

6 Maude Petre, *Alfred Loisy: His Religious Significance* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1944), 64.

7 Petre, *Autobiography and Life*, 2.389.

8 Petre, *Alfred Loisy*, 112.

9 George Tyrrell, “Lex Orandi, Lex Credendi,” in George Tyrrell, *Through Scylla and Charybdis or The Old Theology and the New* (London: Longmans, Green and Co., 1907), 85–86.

10 “Hilaire Bourdon” [= George Tyrrell], *The Church and the Future (L'Eglise et l'Avenir)* (private printing, 1903). Reprinted by Maude Petre after Tyrrell's death (Hampstead: Priory Press, 1910), 27. The “majors” and “minors” are the premises of Catholic theology.



Despite Tyrrell's somewhat dismissive attitude to patristic creedal and theological formulations,<sup>11</sup> by 1900 he had begun to study early Christianity's development in earnest. His interest was piqued by John Henry Newman, by (mostly German) historians of Christian origins, and by the Catholic biblical scholar Alfred Loisy. It is no accident that at the very time Tyrrell was attempting to rethink 'doctrinal development' he was immersed in these critical studies. By 1906 he was confessing, "I see how the close historical study of Christian origins and developments must undermine many of our most fundamental assumptions in regard to dogmas and institutions."<sup>12</sup>

## 2 Modernism

'Modernism' was the name chosen by Pius x and his advisors "to describe and condemn certain liberal, anti-scholastic, and historico-critical forms of thought occurring in the Roman Catholic Church between c. 1890 and 1914."<sup>13</sup> Maude Petre considered Catholic Modernism "an effort to combine the latest claims of science and history and democracy with the spiritual teachings of the Church."<sup>14</sup> It was, she believed, "the first time science had found its way into the very sanctuary of Christianity."<sup>15</sup>

11 Examples are the wording of the Athanasian Creed (George Tyrrell, "The Rights and Limits of Theology," in Tyrrell, *Through Scylla and Charybdis*, 205); proofs for the existence of God (George Tyrrell, *Lex Orandi, or Prayer and Creed* [Longmans, Green and Co., 1904], 73). For Tyrrell, "Revelation as Experience," in Loome, "George Tyrrell," 146, creeds are "human statements inspired by divine experience."

12 George Tyrrell, *A Much-Abused Letter* (London: Longmans, Green and Co., 1906), 48–49.

13 The name is given in the encyclical *Pascendi dominici gregis* of 1907. I cite the translation in [Ernesto Buonaiuti], *The Programme of Modernism: A Reply to the Encyclical of Pius x, Pascendi Dominici Gregis*, trans. George Tyrrell (New York and London: G.P. Putnam's Sons/ The Knickerbocker Press, 1908), 153. For discussion see Gabriel Daly, "Theological and Philosophical Modernism," in *Catholicism Contending With Modernity: Roman Catholic Modernism and Anti-Modernism in Historical Context*, ed. Darrell Jodock (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 102; and Raffaello Morghen, "Il modernismo e la Storia del Cristianesimo," in *Ernesto Buonaiuti Storico del Cristianesimo, A Trent' Anni della Morte*, Istituto Storico Italiano per Il Medio Evo, Studi Storici, fasc. 106–108 (Rome: Istituto Storico Italiano per Il Medio Evo, 1978), 18.

14 Maude D. Petre, "Friedrich von Hügel: Personal Thoughts and Reminiscences," *Hibbert Journal* 24 (1926): 83–84.

15 Eadem, *Modernism: Its Failures and Its Fruits* (London and Edinburgh: T.C. and E.C. Jack, 1918), 202. One lesson to be taken from Modernism: no religion can use history without

More a 'current' in Catholicism than an organised movement, Modernism crossed national boundaries, with different emphases—theological, philosophical, historical, biblical-critical—emerging in France, Italy, and England.<sup>16</sup> Weighty questions were at stake: were Christian doctrines "immutable and perennially valid" or "culturally limited expressions of truths"?<sup>17</sup> Would the Roman church engage the issues of late nineteenth- and twentieth-century scholarship, or (as the Modernists feared) remain mired in Counter-Reformation and Ultramontane assumptions?<sup>18</sup>

Central to some Modernists' critique was the rise of the 'Higher Criticism' of the Bible. Although Leo XIII's encyclical of 1879, *Aeterni Patris*, had encouraged philosophical and theological studies—albeit in a Thomistic mode—critical biblical scholarship was less enthusiastically welcomed.<sup>19</sup> Leo's 1893 encyclical, *Providentissimus Deus*, critiqued 'Higher Criticism';<sup>20</sup> in Alfred Loisy's view, it "snuffed out the first manifestations of Biblical criticism."<sup>21</sup> In 1902, Leo established a Biblical Commission to adjudicate newer approaches to Scripture. While the Commission's original membership was relatively liberal,

---

"becoming subject to the laws of history" (54). Petre uses 'science' in the sense of 'scholarship' (*Wissenschaft*).

16 The description of Modernism as "a tendency, a spirit, a movement" was common among its partisans. See George Tyrrell, "Mediaevalism and Modernism," *HTR* 1 (1908): 304. On Modernists' interactions see e.g., Alex R. Vidler, *The Modernist Movement in the Roman Church: Its Origins and Outcome* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1934), chs. 21–24; and Darrell Jodock, "Introduction II: The Modernists and the Anti-Modernists," in Jodock, *Catholicism Contending with Modernity*, 24.

17 Daly, "Theological and Philological Modernism," 88.

18 Bernard M.G. Reardon, *Roman Catholic Modernism* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1970), 12.

19 The marginal status of biblical studies in Catholic seminary curricula in the late nineteenth century, writes C.J.T. Talor, "Innovation in Biblical Interpretation," in Jodock, *Catholicism Contending with Modernity*, 197, "reflects its marginality in neo-scholasticism."

20 See Gerald P. Fogarty, *American Catholic Biblical Scholarship: A History from the Early Republic to Vatican II* (San Francisco: Harper and Row, 1989), 44–45; Vidler, *Modernist Movement*, 80–88; Alfred Loisy, *Mémoires pour servir à l'histoire religieuse de notre temps* (Paris: Emile Nourry, 1930), vol. 1, ch. 8; and idem, *My Duel with the Vatican*, trans. Richard Wilson Boynton (New York: E.P. Dutton and Co., 1924), 137–46. Loisy disclaimed being a central influence, and noted errors and omissions in the article.

21 Alfred Loisy, *Simple réflexions sur le décret du Saint-Office Lamentabili sane exitu et sur l'encyclique Pascendi dominici gregis* (Ceffonds: Chez l'auteur, 1908), 23.

subsequent members—some not even biblical scholars—were considerably more conservative.<sup>22</sup>

In English Catholicism, ‘historical development’ came in for criticism even before the 1907 anti-Modernist decrees. The “Joint Pastoral” of January 1901, signed by Herbert Cardinal Vaughan and fourteen English Catholic bishops,<sup>23</sup> claimed that the Catholic church at present replicated the primitive church and spoke with the same infallibility. To be sure, the church had “grown,” but (the bishops cautioned) growth implies “no essential change.” “Even in England,” they warn, some hold a false theory, namely, that the progress of Christian doctrine consists in “real change.” The church’s *magisterium* alone, they counter, was entrusted with guarding and infallibly explaining doctrines of the faith as a “Divine deposit.”<sup>24</sup> The ‘deposit of faith’ is here clearly linked to a denial of “real change” in doctrine.<sup>25</sup>

Then came the anti-Modernist decrees. *Lamentabili sane exitu*, issued in July 1907, condemned 65 propositions (mostly derived from the writings of Alfred Loisy, with some from those of George Tyrrell). *Lamentabili* assumed that the movement had a coherent body of doctrine, a point denied by the Modernists.<sup>26</sup> The second decree, *Pascendi dominici gregis*, issued in September 1907, denounced the findings of biblical criticism, the theory of development in history, and the sharp separation of ‘history’ from ‘faith’.<sup>27</sup> In a much-quoted

22 Vidler, *Modernist Movement*, 96, 128, and 138; and Fogarty, *American Catholic Biblical Scholarship*, 96, 141–42, and 182–83. The Commission affirmed the Mosaic authorship of the Pentateuch and the unity of the book of Isaiah, among other points.

23 For Tyrrell and the pastoral letter see Mary Jo Weaver, “George Tyrrell and the Joint Pastoral Letter,” *DR* 99:334 (Jan. 1981): 18–39. The document was designed by Archbishop (and soon to be Pius X’s Secretary of State) Rafael Merry del Val, assisted by several Jesuits and with the blessing of Leo XIII. See David G. Schultenover, *A View from Rome: On the Eve of the Modernist Crisis* (New York: Fordham University Press, 1993), chs 3 and 4, esp. 150–51.

24 “The Church and Liberal Catholicism: Joint Pastoral Letter,” issued Jan. 1901, Appendix B in *Letters from a “Modernist”: The Letters of George Tyrrell to Wilfrid Ward, 1893–1908*, ed. Mary Jo Weaver (Shepherdstown, WV: Patmos Press, 1981), 147–50, *passim*.

25 In May 1901, Tyrrell responded strongly to the pastoral letter, writing under the name “Halifax” ([Halifax], “The Recent Anglo-Roman Pastoral,” *Nineteenth Century* 49 [May 1901]: 736–54). Viscount Halifax, president of the English Church Union, wrote the introduction and conclusion; Tyrrell, the substance. See Schultenover, *George Tyrrell*, 152–56; and Sagovsky, “*On God’s Side*,” 122–25.

26 For example see Loisy, *Simple réflexions*, 19; *Pascendi* works up a system that “the modernists ought to have had,” even though they themselves did not profess it.

27 English translation of *Pascendi* in [Buonaiuti], *Programme of Modernism*, 149–245. On the condemnations see Reardon, *Roman Catholic Modernism*, 63; and Vidler, *Modernist Movement*, 217–19.

phrase, Pius declared Modernism to be “the synthesis of all heresies.”<sup>28</sup> Last, a disciplinary measure of September 1910 required an anti-Modernist oath from clergy, religious superiors, and professors in theological seminaries.<sup>29</sup> The anti-Modernist decrees of 1907, coupled with the oath, set back Catholic scholarship on Christian origins for decades.<sup>30</sup>

### 3 George Tyrrell and Modernism

Within English Catholicism, George Tyrrell served as a flash-point for debates over Modernism. Comparing the resistance to ‘development’ with the church’s rejection of Galileo’s claims, he concluded, “If it was hard to believe in a moving earth it is harder to believe in a moving Church.”<sup>31</sup> From 1899 onward, Tyrrell found himself in ever-increasing difficulties with his Jesuit superiors. He wrote under pseudonyms to avoid censure.<sup>32</sup> After several years of mutual dissatisfaction, he was dismissed from the Order in February 1906.<sup>33</sup> In addition to his numerous writings critiquing the Catholic hierarchy and Neo-Scholastic theology, Tyrrell wrote two fiery letters criticising the 1907 decrees to the *London Times* and to newspapers elsewhere.<sup>34</sup> For these, he was given a ‘minor’ excommunication (‘deprived of the sacraments’) on 22 October 1907.<sup>35</sup>

28 *Pascendi dominici gregis* in [Buonaiuti], *Programme*, 214.

29 *Sacrorum antistitum* (8 Sept. 1910). For discussion see Petre, *Modernism*, 179–82; and Fogarty, *American Catholic Biblical Scholarship*, 170.

30 Schultenover, *George Tyrrell*, vii.

31 George Tyrrell, “Prospects of Modernism,” *Hibbert Journal* 6 (Jan. 1908): 247–48. But he believed education would advance the cause (253–55).

32 For example, the first edition of Tyrrell’s *The Church and the Future* (1903) was published under the pseudonym “Hilaire Bourdon.” Several of his articles were published unsigned for the same reason.

33 Tyrrell considered asking to be ‘secularised’ in 1905, but withdrew his request: Tyrrell to [Wilfrid] Ward, 21 March 1906, Freiburg i.Br. (Weaver, *Letters from a “Modernist,”* 103). Tyrrell asked for release from the Jesuits in 1904, but was persuaded to stay: Tyrrell to Mrs. Bellamy [Maria Longworth] Storer, 3 October 1906, Boutre, Vinon, Var (Weaver, *Letters from a “Modernist,”* 168).

34 The letters to the *Times* are dated 30 Sept. and 1 Oct. 1907 (M.D. Petre, *Von Hügel and Tyrrell: The Story of a Friendship* [New York: E.P. Dutton and Co., 1937], 160, 162–64).

35 For the sequence of events see Schultenover, *George Tyrrell*, 332–37; and Sagovsky, “*On God’s Side*,” 227. A ‘minor’ excommunication allowed other Catholics still to associate with him (Marvin R. O’Connell, *Critics on Trial: An Introduction to the Catholic Modernist Crisis* [Washington, D.C.: Catholic University of America Press, 1994], 352).

Meanwhile in 1907, an anonymously-issued book, *Il programma dei modernisti*, was published in Rome. *Programma*, it is now known, was written by the Modernist historian Ernesto Buonaiuti. Tyrrell's English translation of *Programma* appeared in January 1908.<sup>36</sup> He praised the work as offering a "most masterly synopsis of the results of Biblical and historical criticism, and a very honest attempt to reconcile them with traditional Christianity of the Catholic type."<sup>37</sup>

Tyrrell died at the age of forty-eight of Bright's Disease on 15 July 1909. Ending his life as an outcast from his order and from Catholicism, he was refused Catholic burial.<sup>38</sup>

#### 4 Studying Christianity's Development: John Henry Newman

Tyrrell's first reflections on 'development' came from his study of John Henry Newman's writings. Between 1885 and 1906, Tyrrell re-read Newman's works,<sup>39</sup> carefully attending to Newman's Fifteenth Oxford University Sermon of 1843 ("The Theory of Developments in Religious Doctrine") and his 1845 book, *An Essay on the Development of Christian Doctrine*.<sup>40</sup> Newman's 1843 sermon considers how dogma is formed: from a few words casually uttered by Galilean fishermen, a great idea grows, and stimulated by heresy, the 'idea' exuberantly

36 The book included a translation of *Pascendi*. See Schultenover, *George Tyrrell*, 338; and Sagovsky, "On God's Side," 230–32.

37 Tyrrell to Dr. Emil Wolff, 20 November 1907, Storrington (Petre, *Autobiography and Life*, 2.356).

38 Bernard Holland, "Memoir," in *Baron Friedrich von Hügel: Selected Letters*, ed. Bernard Holland (London and Toronto: J.M. Dent, 1928), 27; Petre, *Autobiography and Life*, 2.433–34, 445; Alfred Loisy, *George Tyrrell et Henri Bremond* (Paris: Librairie Emile Nourry, 1936), 14–28; and Sagaovsky, "On God's Side," 257–62.

39 See Nicholas Sagovsky, "Frustration, Disillusion and Enduring, Filial Respect: George Tyrrell's Debt to John Henry Newman," in *Newman and the Modernists*, ed. Mary Jo Weaver (Lanham, Md: University Press of America, 1985), 97–98, citing letters in Petre's *Autobiography and Life*, 2.209 and 208, and Tyrrell to Wilfrid Ward, 4 January 1904, in Weaver, *Letters from a "Modernist"*, 92.

40 Tyrrell's exploration of 'development', Newman, and the 'deposit of faith' was early stimulated by his correspondence with Wilfrid Ward, Liberal Catholic layman and (from 1906) editor of *Dublin Review*. See Schultenover, *George Tyrrell*, ch. 3; and Weaver, *Letters from a "Modernist"*. Ward's *Life of John Henry, Cardinal Newman* and *The Oxford Movement* were published in 1912, after Tyrrell's death, but they had had a long germination.

'evolves' to a more complete form.<sup>41</sup> Scripture merely *begins* "a series of developments."<sup>42</sup>

*Essay* shows Newman as an accomplished patristics scholar, as had his earlier *Arians of the Fourth Century* (1833). Having famously pronounced that "the Christianity of history is not Protestantism," that "to be deep in history is to cease to be a Protestant,"<sup>43</sup> Newman in *Essay* proceeds *also* to fault contemporary Catholic (and Anglican) understandings of the Vincentian Canon.<sup>44</sup> Newman here describes 'development' as "the germination and maturation of some truth or apparent truth on a large mental field"—yet its ultimate 'assemblage of aspects' must belong to the original 'idea.'<sup>45</sup> 'Beginnings' do not show an idea's capacity to develop through time. Rather, "to live is to change," Newman famously concludes, "and to be perfect is to have changed often."<sup>46</sup> An idea's ability to develop is simply its "proof of life."<sup>47</sup> Yet 'development' has its limits: Newman considers changes only as "consolidations or adaptations."<sup>48</sup> Many doctrines were at first "held back," as he puts it: for example, original sin<sup>49</sup> or papal supremacy.<sup>50</sup> Newman assumes that an external authority, an infallible church, will test developments.<sup>51</sup>

In Part II of *Essay*, Newman details the seven tests or 'notes', as he calls them, of the genuine doctrinal development of an idea: its preservation of type; continuity of principles; power of assimilation; logical sequence; anticipation of its future; conservative action upon its past; and chronic vigour. These he

41 John Henry Newman, "The Theory of Developments in Religious Doctrine," in John Henry Newman, *Fifteen Sermons Preached Before the University of Oxford*, 3rd ed. (New York: Scribner, Welford, and Co., 1872), 312–51; #6–7 at 316–17; and #20 at 329.

42 Newman, "Theory of Developments," #28 (5), 335; looking to Scripture for each doctrinal proposition is futile.

43 John Henry Newman, *An Essay on the Development of Christian Doctrine* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday and Company, 1960), part I, "Introduction," #5, 34–35. I list part, chapter, section, and subsection numbers (where there are such), as well as page numbers, in the following notes to assist readers consulting other editions.

44 Newman, *Essay*, part I: "Introduction," #19, 51.

45 Newman, *Essay*, part I, ch. 1.1. #5, 61. By 'idea', Newman means the 'object', Christianity itself, as impressed upon the mind of the church. Only over time and under diverse circumstances could 'the object's' consequences be seen (Chadwick, *From Bossuet to Newman*, 149).

46 Newman, *Essay*, part I, ch. 1.1. #7, 63.

47 Newman, *Essay*, part II, ch. 5.3. #2, 190.

48 Newman, *Essay*, part II, ch. 12. #9, 417.

49 Newman, *Essay*, part I, ch. 4.1. #4, 139.

50 Newman, *Essay*, part I, ch. 4.3. #1, 158.

51 Newman, *Essay*, part I, ch. 2.2. #4, 97.

illustrates with extensive references to patristic theology. The seven ‘notes’, he affirms, allow us to ascertain “the unity and identity of the idea with itself through all stages of its development from first to last.”<sup>52</sup> The test of “conservative action on its past,” for example, suggests that true doctrinal development allows for change, but change that operates “without loss or reversal of what was before, but on the contrary, [is] protective and confirmative of it.”<sup>53</sup> The new is understood as latent in what came before; development protects, not supersedes.<sup>54</sup>

## 5 Tyrrell Reading Newman

Tyrrell had not always championed ‘historical development’: Newman’s writings, he confessed, had served as an important stimulus.<sup>55</sup> Some who imagined that Tyrrell would emerge as a second Newman,<sup>56</sup> however, would be disappointed, as Tyrrell began to critique Newman’s scheme.<sup>57</sup>

Tyrrell perceived that Newman had given somewhat different explanations of ‘development’ and the ‘deposit’.<sup>58</sup> Tyrrell favoured the explanation of the Fifteenth Oxford University Sermon of 1843, in which Newman claimed that past formulations were to be tested by present experience and, if necessary, restated for contemporary understanding.<sup>59</sup> Here, revelation is seen (in Tyrrell’s words) as “continually presented to our apprehension.”<sup>60</sup> On this view, Catholics were not to be slavishly tied to past formulations. If Catholics affirm that ‘the object’ of religious experience is ever-present,<sup>61</sup> why should they “venerate and rule [themselves] by the past, and presumably less perfect,

52 Newman, *Essay*, part II, ch. 5.7. #3, 206.

53 Newman, *Essay*, part II, ch. II (Introduction), 395–96.

54 Newman, *Essay*, part II, ch. II.1 #1, 396. Newman cites the doctrine of Mary as ‘Mother of God’ as protecting the doctrine of the incarnation (*Essay*, part II, ch. II.2).

55 For Tyrrell’s explication of Newman’s University Sermon of 1843 and his 1845 book see George Tyrrell, “Semper Eadem (II),” in Tyrrell, *Through Scylla and Charybdis*, 133–54.

56 Petre, *Autobiography and Life*, 2.207.

57 Tyrrell to M. Raoul Gout, 26 May 1906 (Petre, *Autobiography and Life*, 2.209); Tyrrell, *Church and the Future*, 28; and Sagovsky, “On God’s Side,” 110–11.

58 Weaver, *Letters from a “Modernist,”* xxviii–xxxiv, n. 44.

59 Tyrrell, “Semper Eadem (II),” 133–54.

60 George Tyrrell, “Semper Eadem (I),” in Tyrrell, *Through Scylla and Charybdis*, 140, whose essay critiques (albeit in rather oblique terms) the notion of Newman on ‘development’ that Wilfrid Ward espoused. Also see Sagovsky, “Frustration, Disillusion,” 107–108.

61 Tyrrell, “Semper Eadem (II),” 139–41, and 142.



formulations of an ever-present object"? Theologians could find their subject-matter not in a sacred doctrine given in the past, but in "the present facts of conscience and religious experience."<sup>62</sup> On this view, the church today speaks "from *vision*, not from *memory*, of revealed truth."<sup>63</sup> Tyrrell came to interpret Newman's 'idea' *not* as an intellectual concept from which "a doctrinal system could be deduced syllogistically,"<sup>64</sup> but rather, as a "spiritual force."<sup>65</sup> For Tyrrell, however, Newman's 'idea' is itself altered in its historical passage.<sup>66</sup>

In *Essay*, by contrast, Newman had assumed the 'deposit of faith' as (in Tyrrell's words) a "communicable record and symbolic reconstruction of a revelation accorded to the Apostles alone." Here, the past remains the standard by which the present is tested.<sup>67</sup> This, Tyrrell claimed, is the view that Neo-Scholastic theologians continue to hold:<sup>68</sup> on their premises, the Athanasian Creed is simply the explication of Peter's confession.<sup>69</sup> The 'Old Orthodoxy' taught that all had been given in an original revelation.<sup>70</sup> Newman himself never imagined, Tyrrell wrote, that the 'deposit of faith' should be interpreted in any other way than the fathers did, as a "form of sound words," and "a body of inspired writings and utterances."<sup>71</sup> Moreover, I suspect that Tyrrell found Newman's heavy citation of patristic authors as a touchstone of truth in *Essay* unhelpful for a theology centred on present 'experience'. To subject "the present and future to the past" is a procedure, Tyrrell notes, totally at odds with the assumptions of the natural sciences,<sup>72</sup> which cast off the faulty past when a better interpretation is devised.

---

62 Ibid., 143.

63 Ibid., 144.

64 George Tyrrell, "Newman's Theory of Development," in Tyrrell, *Christianity at the Cross-Roads* (London: Longmans, Green and Co., 1909), 29.

65 Ibid., 33.

66 For example, we still use the word 'Logos' (John 1:1), even though it does not carry the connections it did to Philo and similar thinkers; the 'idea' is now better expressed as 'consubstantial'. See Tyrrell, "Revelation as Experience," 139. We could not alter the 'idea' if the words were God's own formulation (140).

67 Tyrrell, "Semper Eadem (11)," 147.

68 Tyrrell, "Semper Eadem (1)," 106, 107, and 112.

69 Tyrrell, "Semper Eadem (11)," 138–39.

70 Tyrrell, "The Old Orthodoxy," in idem, *Christianity at the Cross-Roads*, 14–20. Here he cites Pius X's view that the Hebrew patriarchs knew the doctrine of the immaculate conception (15). Essays in this book are not identified by venue and date of their original publication.

71 Tyrrell, "Introduction" to Henri Bremond, *The Mystery of Newman*, trans. H.C. Corrance (London: Williams and Norgate, 1907), xiv–xv.

72 Tyrrell, "Semper Eadem (11)," 149.



Entertaining Newman's notion of doctrinal development prompted Tyrrell to reconceive the 'deposit': it was "a Spirit, Principle, or Idea," not a "document" or a precise doctrinal statement. Such reconception, he argued, would free theology from bondage to past ages.<sup>73</sup> As a Spirit or a principle, the 'deposit' was more a *lex orandi* than a *lex credendi*.<sup>74</sup> Changes in philosophical, scientific, or historical belief, he claimed, did not disrupt this "unity of spirit."<sup>75</sup> Only when the 'heroic,' spirit-filled age of early Christianity had passed did the 'deposit' gradually (and in Tyrrell's view, unfortunately) come to be considered "as a system of doctrine rather than as a spirit." Concomitantly, the institutional church now became the vital organ for interpreting the 'deposit'.<sup>76</sup> Tyrrell (displaying his recent study of Christian origins) adds that the sub-apostolic age's belief in "an immediate consummation of all things" obviated the need for the notion of doctrinal development.<sup>77</sup>

But what is the entity that 'develops'? Around 1899, Tyrrell began to distinguish 'revelation' from 'theology'.<sup>78</sup> Revelation, he claimed, is a 'showing' that furnishes the 'subject-matter' that theologians translate "into the technical language of philosophical systems."<sup>79</sup> Theology, not revelation, develops.<sup>80</sup> In one version of his reflections, Tyrrell wrote that to claim revelation as developing would make the apostolic age seem like "primeval twilight."<sup>81</sup> On *this* understanding, Tyrrell appears to grant Christian origins a special status.

Yet—in a second way of thinking—Tyrrell defined 'revelation' as "the indwelling spirit of Christ, present to all men at all times."<sup>82</sup> In *this* rendition, modern Christians might have a 'vision' of the same divine 'realities' as

73 Tyrrell, "Lex Orandi, Lex Credendi," 85–86. Similarly, idem, "Semper Eadem (1)," 106.

74 Tyrrell, "Lex Orandi, Lex Credendi," 104; a "concrete religion left by Christ to the Church" (86). "A way of life": Sagovsky, "Frustration, Disillusion," 103–105.

75 George Tyrrell, "Theologism—A Reply," in idem, *Through Scylla and Charybdis*, 328.

76 Tyrrell, *Church and the Future*, 79–80, discussed in Schultenover, *George Tyrrell*, 296.

77 Tyrrell, "Semper Eadem (11)," 146.

78 On Tyrrell's turn to 'revelation as experience' see Gabriel Daly, *Transcendence and Immanence: A Study in Catholic Modernism and Integralism* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1980), ch. 7.

79 George Tyrrell, "Revelation," in idem, *Through Scylla and Charybdis*, 287 and 284. 'Showing' was a phrase of the fourteenth-century mystic, Julian of Norwich. For Tyrrell's study of Julian see Schultenover, *George Tyrrell*, 102, 191, 216–17, and 222. Petre introduced Tyrrell to Julian's writings (382, n. 171). Also see George Tyrrell, *Medievalism: A Reply to Cardinal Mercier* (London: Longmans, Green and Co., 1908), 156.

80 Tyrrell, "Revelation," 297.

81 Ibid., 294–95; and Tyrrell, "Theologism," 324–25.

82 Tyrrell, "Revelation as Experience," 131 and 135.

had their early counterparts. Thus there need be no slavish devotion to what Tyrrell considered outmoded forms.<sup>83</sup> This claim also reminds Christians that the future may produce a still better understanding of the faith.<sup>84</sup> Tyrrell pressed this second notion of revelation as key for modern Catholics. On this view, modern Christians enjoyed the same access to the divine as had the first Christians. Here, his scholarly reading on Christian origins did not block a more 'presentist' statement of faith. As we shall see, this second version of 'revelation' could be used to assuage those 'heartaches of history'.

## 6 Tyrrell's Critique of Newman

Tyrrell came to think that Newman's theory—in itself so objectionable to traditional Catholic theology<sup>85</sup>—did not allow for true change. Newman was too trusting that old doctrines could still be defended by the newer methods.<sup>86</sup> By 1902, Tyrrell was cautioning fellow Catholics not to idolise Newman. Many difficult problems for religion had arisen since Newman's era, he observed; the 'data' then were 'imperfect', the needs different. Comparing Newman with John the Baptist, Tyrrell proclaimed that Newman must 'decrease' as a new era in the understanding of 'historical development' dawned.<sup>87</sup> Real change in doctrine had occurred over time: "'development' means death and decay as well as growth," he wrote in 1904.<sup>88</sup>

Newman's *Essay*, Tyrrell charged, assumed that the 'idea' always remained the same, even when variously expressed.<sup>89</sup> But, he retorted, a 'deposit of faith' that simply 'unfolded' could not answer present-day scholarly problems.<sup>90</sup> In addition, Newman had bypassed that first decisive phase of the Christian movement (i.e., the Synoptics), which Tyrrell labeled a "dark period which is now the subject of so much anxious study."<sup>91</sup> Newman was still fighting

83 Tyrrell, "Revelation," 297.

84 Tyrrell, "Old Orthodoxy," 15.

85 Conservative Catholics pointed out that Newman was not yet a Catholic when he wrote his Oxford Sermon (1843) and his *Essay on the Development of Christian Doctrine* (1845).

86 Tyrrell, "Newman's Theory of Development," 31.

87 [Tyrrell], "Limitations of Newman," *The Monthly Register* 1 (Oct. 1902): 264–65.

88 Tyrrell to W.J. Williams, 20 Nov. 1904 (Petre, *Autobiography and Life*, 2.220).

89 Tyrrell to M. Raoul Gout, 26 May 1906 (Petre, *Autobiography and Life*, 2.209); and Sagovsky, "On God's Side," 110–11.

90 Sagovsky, "On God's Side," 175–76, discussing "Semper Eadem."

91 Tyrrell to [Wilfrid] Ward, 9 Dec. 1903, Richmond, Yorks. (Weaver, *Letters from a "Modernist,"* 85.)

eighteenth-century battles, unaware of the scholarship that loomed ahead.<sup>92</sup> Newman, Tyrrell noted, knew no German when he wrote his *Essay* and was largely ignorant of German criticism. Moreover, the ‘eschatological school’ of New Testament criticism had not yet arisen.<sup>93</sup> Despite his critique, Tyrrell acknowledged one benefit of Newman’s notion of ‘development’ in *Essay*: he provided criteria for distinguishing true from false developments, criteria that Loisy (in *L’Evangile et l’Eglise*) had failed to provide.<sup>94</sup> By 1906, Tyrrell admitted that he was shedding, little by little, his earlier Newmanism.<sup>95</sup>

Tyrrell charged church authorities with putting ‘blinkers’ on the concept of development, treating it as purely secondary, as a mere handmaiden to theology.<sup>96</sup> After *Pascendi* was issued in 1907, Tyrrell entered the debate on whether the decree condemned Newman’s version of ‘development’ as well as ‘Modernists’. Tyrrell thought that it had; the condemnation of Newman is “written all over the face of the Encyclical.” To the Vatican, Tyrrell argued, “‘Newmanism’ means ‘doctrinal development’ before all else.”<sup>97</sup> Yet Newman’s view that came to seem so inadequate to Tyrrell was ‘too much’ for Pius x and his advisors.

Newman provided one major stimulus for Tyrrell’s thinking about Christianity’s historical development. There were, however, other major influences emanating from non-Catholic and non-English quarters.

## 7 Tyrrell’s Other Reading

Tyrrell’s scholarly study of German and French works on early Christianity further prompted his critique of an unchanging ‘deposit of faith’. Tyrrell’s intellectual mentor, Baron Friedrich von Hügel, convinced him to learn

92 Tyrrell, “Introduction,” to Bremond, *Mystery of Newman*, xv.

93 George Tyrrell, “First Results of New Testament Criticism,” in Tyrrell, *Christianity at the Cross-Roads*, 35 and 37.

94 Tyrrell, to Friedrich von Hügel, 8 April 1903 (Petre, *Autobiography and Life*, 2.187).

95 Tyrrell to M. Raoul Gout, 26 May 1906 (Petre, *Autobiography and Life*, 2.210). By 1904, his interest was languishing: Tyrrell to W.J. Williams, 20 Nov. 1904 (Petre, *Autobiography and Life*, 2.220).

96 Tyrrell to [Wilfrid] Ward, 11 Dec. 1903 (Weaver, *Letters from a “Modernist,”* 87); also in Petre, *Autobiography and Life*, 2.215–16.

97 “The Pope and Modernism: Is Newman’s Teaching Condemned?” *Manchester Guardian* 20 November 1907, reproducing an article Tyrrell wrote in the *Church Guardian* a few days earlier.

German<sup>98</sup> and to read Harnack, Troeltsch, Sohm, and other German scholars, as well as Loisy.<sup>99</sup> Maude Petre later blamed von Hügel for diverting Tyrrell from his own sphere of expertise (presumably, a devotionally-oriented modern theology) into enterprises “whose character was militant rather than apostolic.”<sup>100</sup> Von Hügel himself, as early as 1902, worried that he had foisted too much German critical scholarship on Tyrrell, and too rapidly.<sup>101</sup> The discoveries, it is clear, were unnerving to Tyrrell.

It is no coincidence that Tyrrell's growing attraction to a theory of historical development came on the heels of his reading—at first foisted on him by von Hügel—of Harnack, Loisy, Sohm, Troeltsch, and others. Here, Alfred Loisy's *L'Evangile et l'Eglise* provided Tyrrell with an important Catholic approach to Christianity's development, one that took account of changed interpretations of Jesus' message as given in the Synoptic Gospels.

We can chart Tyrrell's reading through statements in his numerous letters as well as in his published works. Reading Adolf von Harnack on early Christianity's historical development, Tyrrell admitted his fear that the Catholic church at present could not command sufficient erudition “to show that the outgrowth [from the primitive Christian era] is a real and legitimate development.” Catholic theologians, he wrote to von Hügel, “go on dreaming & romancing about a full-fledged apostolic Catholicism.” They deny that Catholicism grew out of a ‘germ’ very unlike what it became, just as a walnut tree differs considerably from the walnut from which it sprouts. Catholic theologians, Tyrrell argued, are eager to anathematise even the tamer notion of development that Newman sets forth in his *Essay on the Development of Doctrine*: they would like to see that book put on the Index.<sup>102</sup>

98 Holland, “Memoir,” in Holland, *Baron Friedrich von Hügel, Selected Letters*, 12; and Petre, *Autobiography and Life*, 2.93–94.

99 Sagovsky, “On God's Side,” 103.

100 Maude D. Petre, *My Way of Faith* (London: J.M. Dent and Sons, 1937), 291. For a critique of Petre's blaming von Hügel, see Daly, *Transcendence and Immanence*, 140–41.

101 Von Hügel to Tyrrell, 4 Dec. 1902, Hampstead (Friedrich von Hügel, *Selected Letters: 1896–1924*, ed. Holland, 113).

102 Tyrrell to von Hügel, 16 June 1900, Richmond, Yorks. (*George Tyrrell's Letters*, selected and ed. M.D. Petre [London: T. Fisher Unwin, 1920], 79); also in Schultenover, *George Tyrrell*, 123, citing Petre Papers, British Library, Add MSS 44927. 119–20; which writing by Harnack is not clear. Schultenover notes that Harnack's *What Is Christianity?* did not appear in English until 1906 (Schultenover, *George Tyrrell*, 123 and 385–86, n. 33).

With his new-found skills, Tyrrell read Harnack's *Das Wesen des Christentums* (published in 1900–1901)<sup>103</sup> and Edwin Hatch's *Influence of Greek Ideas and Usages upon the Christian Church* (1888).<sup>104</sup> From Rudolf Sohm's *Kirchenrecht*,<sup>105</sup> Tyrrell learned that an original Spirit-filled gathering of believers gave way, even by the second century, to an organisation with officers:<sup>106</sup> the move from 'charisma' to 'office'.<sup>107</sup> From Troeltsch's *Die Absolutheit des Christentums und die Religionsgeschichte* and some of his other essays,<sup>108</sup> Tyrrell absorbed the view that Christianity should be studied in the context of other (especially ancient) religions. He also found confirmation that Jesus' ethic differed dramatically from the modern Kantian ethic of individual autonomy (read: Protestantism): Jesus' preaching of the kingdom of God, and his valuing of community over the individual, could not be squared with Kant's exaltation of autonomy.<sup>109</sup> Troeltsch emphasised that Jesus' early followers focused on the immediate expectation of the kingdom and heard the gospel as a call for preparation. In Troeltsch's phrase, that expectation expressed "the naïve realism of the ancient world."<sup>110</sup> Tyrrell in 1902 was digesting Troeltsch's claim that

- 
- 103 Tyrrell to Herbert Thurston, 21 Aug. 1901 (*A Jesuit Friendship: Letters of George Tyrrell to Herbert Thurston*, ed. Robert Butterworth [Digby Stuart, U.K.: Roehampton Institute, 1988], 104). Butterworth remarks (109 and 110) that Thurston gave Tyrrell a copy of Harnack's book and a German dictionary (seen in Tyrrell's letter to Thurston, Richmond, Yorks., September 1901).
- 104 Tyrrell to Petre, 15 Aug. 1900 (Petre Papers, British Library, Add MSS 52367 [referring to Edwin Hatch, *The Influence of Greek Ideas and Usages upon the Christian Church* [London: Williams and Norgate, 1897]).
- 105 Rudolf Sohm, *Kirchenrecht*, Bd 1: *Die geschichtlichen Grundlagen* (Leipzig: Duncker and Humblot, 1892). For the debates that ensued see Enrique Nardoni, "Charism in the Early Church since Rudolph Sohm: An Ecumenical Challenge," *TS* 53 (1992): 646–62.
- 106 Rudolf Sohm, *Outlines of Church History*, trans. May Sinclair from the 8th German ed. of Sohm's *Kirchengeschichte im Grundriss* (London and New York: Macmillan and Co., 1895), 32–34. Monarchical episcopate arose at the beginning of the second century (37).
- 107 Sohm, *Kirchenrecht*, 1.158–64; 26–28 (on charismatic organisation of earliest Christianity); and idem, *Outlines*, 40.
- 108 Schultenover, *George Tyrrell*, 261 and 262, citing von Hügel to Tyrrell, 8 Sept. 1902 (Petre Papers, British Library, Add MSS 44928.26–27). Ernst Troeltsch, *Die Absolutheit des Christentums und die Religionsgeschichte* (Tübingen: J.C.B. Mohr [Paul Siebeck], 1902).
- 109 Ernst Troeltsch, "Grundprobleme der Ethik," in Ernst Troeltsch, *Gesammelte Schriften*, Bd 2: *Zur religiösen Lage, Religionsphilosophie und Ethik*, 2nd ed. (Aalen: Scientia Verlag, 1962), 629–39.
- 110 Troeltsch, "Grundprobleme der Ethik" (Troeltsch, *Gesammelte Schriften*, 2.634–35), trans. Walter S. Bense, "Two Essays by Ernst Troeltsch," *Unitarian Universalist Christian* 29.1–2 (Spring/Summer 1974): 41 and 42; and by Friedrich von Hügel, "The Specific Genius and

the notion of the kingdom “survived the demise of the eschatological thought that produced it.”<sup>111</sup>

Most important, in 1902, Tyrrell struggled with Johannes Weiss' *Die Predigt Jesu vom Reiche Gottes* (1892).<sup>112</sup> Tyrrell told von Hügel that he had ‘flung’ himself at Weiss's book and was trying to assimilate it, “though it should cost me every tooth in my jaw.” His old suspicions had been confirmed. He did not wish to earn ‘stability’ for his faith only by remaining ignorant of this biblical scholarship.<sup>113</sup> Tyrrell was convinced by Weiss' argument that in the Synoptic Gospels, the kingdom was not a present, inward state, or a social goal towards which humans might strive, but an apocalyptic, imminent, otherworldly future state, “a radically superworldly entity which stands in diametric opposition to this world”<sup>114</sup>—and that the kingdom that Jesus expected had not happened.<sup>115</sup>

These views were confirmed by Loisy's *L'Evangile et l'Eglise*, which appeared in 1902, the very year Tyrrell was reading Weiss.<sup>116</sup> The eschatological understanding of earliest Christianity necessitated deeper thinking about historical development. David Schultenover claims that it was Tyrrell's reading of Loisy that spurred his changing views on ‘development’: he gradually rejected Newman's notion (“that the expression of dogma changes so that the content might remain identical”) and adopted Loisy's (“that the content itself changes as the mind of man changes”).<sup>117</sup> Loisy had boldly claimed that Harnack was wrong: Harnack's reduction of the ‘essence’ of Jesus' message to a few

---

Capacities of Christianity. Studied in Connection with the Works of Professor Ernst Troeltsch,” in Friedrich von Hügel, *Essays and Addresses on the Philosophy of Religion*, 1st Series, 144–94 (London: J.M. Dent and Sons, 1921), 158. On thoroughgoing eschatology see Brent W. Sockness, *Against False Apologetics: Wilhelm Hermann and Ernst Troeltsch in Conflict* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1998), 139; and Troeltsch, “Grundprobleme,” *Gesammelte Schriften*, 2.636.

111 Sockness, *Against False Apologetics*, 139; later Christianity retained a tension between its “religious goal and the values of worldly culture.”

112 Schultenover, *George Tyrrell*, 263; and Johannes Weiss, *Die Predigt Jesu vom Reiche Gottes* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck and Ruprecht, 1892).

113 Tyrrell to von Hügel, 5 Dec. 1902 (Petre Papers, British Library, Add MSS 44928.59), cited in Schultenover, *George Tyrrell*, 271. About this time, Tyrrell was also reading Percy Gardner's *The Historic View of the New Testament*, Jowett Lectures of 1901 (London: Adam and Charles Black, 1904); and Joseph Turmel's “L'Eschatologie a la fin du IV<sup>e</sup> siècle,” *RHLR* 5.2–4 (1900): 97–127, 200–32, and 289–321 (Schultenover, *George Tyrrell*, 274).

114 Weiss, *Jesus' Proclamation*, 114 and 129.

115 *Ibid.*, 79.

116 Schultenover, *George Tyrrell*, 249, citing Tyrrell to Loisy, 12 Oct. 1903 (Fonds Loisy, Bibliothèque Nationale, Nouvelles acquisitions françaises 15662).

117 Schultenover, *George Tyrrell*, 268.

postulates vacated his preaching of the coming kingdom and radical renunciation.<sup>118</sup> If there were such a thing as an ‘essence’ of the gospel (which Loisy doubted), it had been truly perpetrated in *Catholic* Christianity.<sup>119</sup> In Loisy’s memorable phrase, “Jesus foretold the Kingdom, and it was the Church that came.”<sup>120</sup> The church, he argued, was necessary for the preservation of Christianity—and the development of papal power for the preservation of the church and the gospel.<sup>121</sup> Although the restoration of the primitive Christianity is impossible, Loisy argued, the Catholic church preserves the *idea* of the heavenly kingdom, of the kingdom’s maker (the messiah), and of the apostolate, or the preaching of the kingdom. Church tradition interprets and adapts these elements to meet new conditions.<sup>122</sup>

Loisy’s argument appealed to Tyrrell;<sup>123</sup> it vindicated Catholic claims *yet* allowed for ‘development’. Tyrrell believed that Loisy had provided Catholics with a way to accept biblical criticism yet keep their faith. We will, he wrote to von Hügel, have “no *modus vivendi* if we now burn the boats that L. [Loisy] has prepared for our escape.”<sup>124</sup> Church authorities should not cast “a mistrustful eye on this last proffered plank of refuge.”<sup>125</sup> (Loisy would not long provide a ‘refuge’: his *L’Evangile et l’Eglise* and four other of his works were condemned in 1903.<sup>126</sup> Tyrrell thanked Loisy for rendering Weiss’ thoroughgoing apocalypticism helpful, not destructive. Weiss’ book, he confessed, had given him “considerable pause.”<sup>127</sup>

---

118 Loisy, *Gospel*, 53–75, 107, and 109.

119 Idem, “From Credence to Faith,” trans. M.D. Petre from passages in Loisy’s *Mémoires pour servir à l’histoire religieuse de notre temps*, 3 vols (Paris: Emile Nourry, 1930), 1.9–91, in *Religion in Transition*, ed. Vergilius Ferm (New York: Macmillan Company, 1937), 148–49. Loisy, however, jettisoned Scholastic ideas on “the formal institution of the Church and the sacraments by Christ, the immutability of dogma and the nature of ecclesiastical authority.” *L’Evangile* was censured by the archbishop of Paris in January 1903 and formally condemned by Rome, along with four other of his books, in December 1903 (149).

120 Loisy, *Gospel*, 166.

121 *Ibid.*, 151 and 164.

122 *Ibid.*, 167.

123 Schultenover, *George Tyrrell*, 266, referring to Loisy, *Gospel and the Church*, 170–71.

124 Tyrrell to von Hügel, 3 Jan. 1902 (Petre Papers, British Library, Add MSS 44928.2), cited in Schultenover, *George Tyrrell*, 252.

125 [George Tyrrell], “The Bible-Question in France,” *Monthly Register* 1 (Oct. 1902): 277 (unsigned review of Albert Houtin, *La Question biblique chez les Catholiques de France au XIX<sup>e</sup> siècle* [Paris: Picard, 1902]).

126 See n. 119 above.

127 Schultenover, *George Tyrrell*, 263–65, citing Tyrrell to Loisy, 20 Nov. 1902 (Fonds Loisy, Bibliothèque Nationale, Nouvelles acquisitions françaises).



From Loisy and Troeltsch, Tyrrell took the argument that Harnack had wrongly identified the 'essence' of the gospel with points that were secondary to "the altogether quite eschatologically orientated thought of Jesus."<sup>128</sup> He faulted Harnack for naturalising and 'interiorising' Jesus' teaching about the kingdom of God.<sup>129</sup> To take "the Second Advent as an accident and not as the very centre and substance of His message, implies a sophistical reading of the Gospel and of early Church history," Tyrrell wrote<sup>130</sup>—though to accept the eschatological belief "honestly," he conceded, "is to land ourselves into a perfect network of theological barbed wires."<sup>131</sup> Tyrrell strongly rejected Harnack's picture of Jesus; in a famous phrase, he wrote, "the Christ that Harnack sees, looking back through nineteen centuries of Catholic darkness, is only the reflection of a Liberal Protestant face, seen at the bottom of a deep well."<sup>132</sup>

Although Tyrrell at this juncture sounded relieved that Loisy had provided a 'way out', he also had darker moments as he pondered critical-historical research on Christian origins. A month before his death, Tyrrell wrote to a friend, Jesus was mistaken about the two discoveries: that the end was near and that he was the messiah. "The first we know was a mistake; the second may have been."<sup>133</sup> He saw just one viable path for his co-religionists: that "a labour of radical reconstruction was the only condition of keeping one's Catholicism."<sup>134</sup> That he did not live to encourage this transformation is just one tragedy of the Modernist movement.

In his last book, *Christianity at the Cross-Roads* (published posthumously in 1910), Tyrrell reviewed the approach to historical development by 'orthodoxies' old and new, and by John Henry Newman. Tyrrell now opposed Newman's notion that the embodiments of the 'idea' are (as Tyrrell saw it) predetermined, unfolding as in an organic process;<sup>135</sup> for Tyrrell, this precluded genuine 'newness'. In addition to these chapters of *Christianity at the Cross-Roads*, others on "first results of New Testament criticism," "the Christ of eschatology,"

128 Alfred Loisy, *L'Evangile et l'Eglise* (Paris: Alphonse Picard et Fils, 1902); and Ernst Troeltsch, "Was heisst 'Wesen des Christentums'?", in Troeltsch, *Gesammelte Schriften*, 2.386–451.

129 George Tyrrell, "Religion and Ethics," *The Month* 101 (Feb. 1903): 134–35 and 136.

130 *Ibid.*, 140.

131 Tyrrell, to [Wilfrid] Ward, 21 Dec. 1902, in Weaver, *Letters from a "Modernist,"* 79.

132 George Tyrrell, "The Christ of Liberal Protestantism," in idem, *Christianity at the Cross-Roads*, 44. This image, often associated with Schweitzer, originated with Tyrrell.

133 Tyrrell to Rev. A. Fawkes, 3 June 1909, cited in Petre, *Autobiography and Life*, 2.399–400.

134 Tyrrell to Loisy, 12 Oct. 1903, Richmond, Yorks., referring to Loisy's 1901 essay on the Gospel of John, cited in Petre, *Autobiography and Life*, 2.394–95.

135 George Tyrrell, "The Christ of Catholicism," in idem, *Christianity at the Cross-Roads*, 64.



and “the apocalyptic vision of Christ,” reveal Tyrrell’s reading and reflection on historical development and Christian origins. His answer is much like Loisy’s: Jesus’ ‘idea’ has an abiding value, not dependent upon apocalyptic imagery.<sup>136</sup> Catholicism preserves the other-worldly vision of Christ. Although the ‘immediacy of the end’ has dropped out, notions of a last judgement, heaven, and hell have been retained.<sup>137</sup> Yet Catholic Modernism, Tyrrell wrote, “acknowledges the apocalyptic elements of Christianity are essential and not accidental, the moral elements subordinate and not principal . . . it faces the conflict between Christianity and modern thought in its purest and acutest form.”<sup>138</sup> The value of Jesus’ ‘idea’ remains, independent of apocalyptic imagery.<sup>139</sup> Catholicism has kept that vision in its ‘transcendentalism’.<sup>140</sup> Jesus’ apocalypticism is now transformed in Catholicism’s affirmation of the ‘transcendent’.<sup>141</sup> (Tyrrell elsewhere wrote in 1909, “if we cannot save huge chunks of transcendentalism, Christianity must go.”)<sup>142</sup> Moreover, Jesus shared the ancients’ religious affirmation of sacramentalism, now preserved in Catholic teachings on baptism and the eucharist.<sup>143</sup> Tyrrell offers an ingenious argument: *if* biblical and historical criticism [so associated with German Protestantism] had had an apologetic bias, its results would not have emerged so favourably toward Catholicism!<sup>144</sup>

Although immersed in scholarship on Christian origins, Tyrrell in the end largely bypassed history. His final affirmation appears theological: Jesus transmits to his Catholic followers the indwelling ‘divine Spirit’; his personality

---

136 Tyrrell, “The Apocalyptic Vision and the Catholic Church,” in idem, *Christianity at the Cross-Roads*, 210.

137 Tyrrell, “Christ of Catholicism,” 66–67 and 90. Tyrrell faults the Protestant view of the afterlife: “the strenuous life of the moral hero continued to all eternity” (78).

138 Tyrrell, “The Abiding Value of the Apocalyptic Idea,” in idem, *Christianity at the Cross-Roads*, 93. Similarly, George Tyrrell to Don Brizio Casciola, 15 July 1903, Istituto Teologico Salesiano, cited in Schultenover, *George Tyrrell*, 311.

139 Tyrrell, “Apocalyptic Vision and the Catholic Church,” 210.

140 Tyrrell, “Christ of Catholicism,” 89. Protestantism, in ‘stifling’ it, has “stifled the Jesus of history.”

141 Tyrrell, “The Apocalyptic Vision of Christ,” in idem, *Christianity at the Cross-Roads*, 126, 137, and 145.

142 Tyrrell to von Hügel, 9 April 1909 (Petre, *Autobiography and Life*, 2.398; also in Sagovsky, “*On God’s Side*,” 255).

143 Tyrrell, “Christ of Catholicism,” 74 and 80.

144 *Ibid.*, 89–90.

is “renewed and strengthened in us.”<sup>145</sup> These sentiments, coupled with his understanding of ‘revelation’ (that contemporary Catholics, not just the first Christians, could glimpse the divine ‘vision’) occasioned Alfred Loisy’s charge of Tyrrell’s ‘mysticism’.<sup>146</sup> Whether or not (as Owen Chadwick once wrote) Tyrrell “threw history over the bulwarks,”<sup>147</sup> it appears that the “heartaches of history” received a healing balm in a manner that ultimately did not depend on ‘history’, but on faith.

## Bibliography

- [Buonaiuti, Ernesto]. *The Programme of Modernism*. Translated by George Tyrrell. New York and London: G.P. Putnam’s Sons, 1908.
- Chadwick, Owen. *From Bossuet to Newman: The Idea of Doctrinal Development*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1957.
- “The Church and Liberal Catholicism: Joint Pastoral Letter,” issued January 1901. In Appendix B, *Letters from a “Modernist”: The Letters of George Tyrrell to Wilfrid Ward, 1893–1908*, edited by Mary Jo Weaver, 131–57. Shepherdstown, WV: Patmos Press, 1981.
- Daly, Gabriel. *Transcendence and Immanence: A Study in Catholic Modernism and Integralism*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1980.
- . “Theological and Philosophical Modernism.” In *Catholicism Contending with Modernity: Roman Catholic Modernism and Anti-Modernism in Historical Context*, edited by Darrell Jodock, 88–112. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000.
- Fogarty, Gerald P. *American Catholic Biblical Scholarship: A History from the Early Republic to Vatican II*. San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1989.
- Gardner, Percy. *The Historic View of the New Testament*, Jowett Lectures of 1901. London: Adam and Charles Black, 1904.
- Hatch, Edwin. *The Influence of Greek Ideas and Usages upon the Christian Church*. London: Williams and Norgate, 1897.
- Holland, Bernard. “Memoir.” In *Baron Friedrich von Hügel, Selected Letters: 1896–1924*, edited by Bernard Holland, 1–68. London and Toronto: J.M. Dent, 1928.

---

145 Tyrrell, “The Religion and Personality of Jesus,” in idem, *Christianity at the Cross-Roads*, 271; and Tyrrell, “The Church and Its Future,” in idem, *Christianity at the Cross-Roads*, 275.

146 Reported in Tyrrell, *Medievalism*, 106; also see Albert Loisy, review of the French translation of George Tyrrell’s *Christianity at the Cross-Roads* (*Le Christianisme à la croisée des chemins*, trans. M.J. Arnavon [Paris: Nourry, 1911]), *RHLR* 2.6 (July 1911): 611.

147 Chadwick, *From Bossuet to Newman*, 129.

- von Hügel, Friedrich. "The Specific Genius and Capacities of Christianity. Studied in Connection with the Works of Professor Ernst Troeltsch." *Constructive Quarterly* (March, December 1914). Reprinted in Friedrich von Hügel, *Essays and Addresses on the Philosophy of Religion*, First Series, 144–94. London: J.M. Dent & Sons, 1921.
- . *Baron Friedrich von Hügel, Selected Letters: 1896–1924*, edited by Bernard Holland. London and Toronto: J.M. Dent, 1928.
- Jodock, Darrell. "Introduction 11: The Modernists and the Anti-Modernists." In *Catholicism Contending with Modernity: Roman Catholic Modernism and Anti-Modernism in Historical Context*, edited by Darrell Jodock, 20–27. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000.
- Loisy, Alfred. *L'Evangile et l'Eglise*. Paris: Alphonse Picard et Fils, 1902. English translation by Christopher Home as *The Gospel and the Church*. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1903.
- . *Simple réflexions sur le décret du Saint-Office Lamentabili sane exitu et sur l'encyclique Pascendi dominici gregis*. Ceffonds: Chez l'auteur, 1908.
- . Review of George Tyrrell, *Le Christianisme à la croisée des chemins*. Paris: Emile Nourry, 1911. French translation by M.J. Arnavon of Tyrrell, *Christianity at the Cross-Roads*. London: Longmans, Green and Co., 1909. *RHLR* 2.6 (July 1911): 609–11.
- . *My Duel with the Vatican*. Trans. Richard Wilson Boynton. New York: E.P. Dutton and Co., 1924. French original: 1913.
- . "From Credence to Faith." Translated by M.D. Petre from passages in Loisy's *Mémoires pour servir à l'histoire religieuse de notre temps*, vol. 1, 9–91. Paris: Emile Nourry, 1930. In *Religion in Transition*, edited by Vergilius Ferm, 126–72. New York: Macmillan, 1937.
- . *Mémoires pour servir à l'histoire religieuse de notre temps*, 3 vols. Paris: Emile Nourry, 1930.
- . *George Tyrrell et Henri Bremond*. Paris: Librairie Emile Nourry, 1936.
- Loome, Thomas M. "George Tyrrell: 'Revelation as Experience.'" *HeyJ* 12.2 (April 1971): 117–49.
- Morghen, Raffaello. "Il modernismo e la Storia del Cristianesimo." In *Ernesto Buonaiuti Storico del Cristianesimo, A Trent' Anni della Morte*, Istituto Storico Italiano per Il Medio Evo, Studi Storici, fasc. 106–108, 7–22. Rome: Istituto Storico Italiano per Il Medio Evo, 1978.
- Nardoni, Enrique. "Charism in the Early Church since Rudolph Sohm: An Ecumenical Challenge." *TS* 53 (1992): 646–62.
- Newman, John Henry. *An Essay on the Development of Christian Doctrine*. Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday and Co., 1960 [1845].
- . "The Theory of Developments in Religious Doctrine." In John Henry Newman, *Fifteen Sermons Preached Before the University of Oxford*, 312–51, 3rd ed. New York: Scribner, Welford, and Co., 1872.

- O'Connell, Marvin R. *Critics on Trial: An Introduction to the Catholic Modernist Crisis*. Washington, D.C.: Catholic University of America Press, 1994.
- Petre, Maude D. *Autobiography and Life of George Tyrrell*, 2 vols. London: Edward Arnold, 1912.
- . *Modernism: Its Failures and Its Fruits*. London and Edinburgh: T.C. and E.C. Jack, 1918.
- . "Friedrich von Hügel. Personal Thoughts and Reminiscences." *Hibbert Journal* 24 (1926): 77–87.
- . *Von Hügel and Tyrrell: The Story of a Friendship*. New York: E.P. Dutton and Co., 1937.
- . *My Way of Faith*. London: J.M. Dent and Sons, 1937.
- . *Alfred Loisy: His Religious Significance*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1944.
- "The Pope and Modernism: Is Newman's Teaching Condemned?" *Manchester Guardian* 20 Nov. 1907.
- Reardon, Bernard M.G. *Roman Catholic Modernism*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1970.
- Sagovsky, Nicholas. "Frustration, Disillusion and Enduring, Filial Respect': George Tyrrell's Debt to John Henry Newman." In *Newman and the Modernists*, edited by Mary Jo Weaver, 97–115. Lanham, Md: University Press of America, 1985.
- . *"On God's Side": A Life of George Tyrrell*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1990.
- Schultenover, David G. *George Tyrrell: In Search of Catholicism*. Shepherdstown, WV: Patmos Press, 1981.
- . *A View from Rome: On the Eve of the Modernist Crisis*. New York: Fordham University Press, 1993.
- Sockness, Brent W. *Against False Apologetics: Wilhelm Hermann and Ernst Troeltsch in Conflict*. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1998.
- Sohm, Rudolf. *Kirchenrecht*, Bd 1: *Die geschichtlichen Grundlagen*. Leipzig: Duncker and Humblot, 1892.
- . *Outlines of Church History*. Translated by May Sinclair from the 8th German ed. of Sohm's *Kirchengeschichte im Grundriss*. London and New York: Macmillan, 1895.
- Talor, C.J.T. "Innovation in Biblical Interpretation." In *Catholicism Contending with Modernity: Roman Catholic Modernism and Anti-Modernism in Historical Context*, edited by Darrell Jodock, 191–211. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000.
- Troeltsch, Ernst. *Die Absolutheit des Christentums und die Religionsgeschichte*. Tübingen: J.C.B. Mohr (Paul Siebeck), 1902. Translated by David Reid from the 3rd German edition as *The Absoluteness of Christianity and the History of Religions*. Richmond, Va: John Knox Press, 1971.
- . "Grundprobleme der Ethik." In Ernst Troeltsch, *Gesammelte Schriften*, Bd 2: *Zur religiösen Lage, Religionsphilosophie und Ethik*, 629–39, 2nd ed. Aalen: Scientia

- Verlag, 1962. Translated by Walter F. Bense from the 2nd German edition as "Two Essays by Ernst Troeltsch." *Unitarian Universalist Christian* 29.1–2 (Spring/Summer 1974): 38–45.
- . "Was heisst 'Wesen des Christentums'?" In Ernst Troeltsch, *Gesammelte Schriften*, Bd 2: *Zur religiösen Lage, Religionsphilosophie und Ethik*, 386–451, 2nd ed. Aalen: Scientia Verlag, 1962. Translated by Michael Pye as "What Does 'Essence of Christianity' Mean?" from the 1913 version, in Ernst Troeltsch, *Writings on Theology and Religion*, translated and edited by Robert Morgan and Michael Pye, 124–79. London: Gerald Duckworth and Co., 1977.
- Turmel, Joseph. "L'Eschatologie a la fin du IV<sup>e</sup> siècle." *RHLR* 5.2–4 (1900): 97–127, 200–32, 289–321.
- Tyrrell, George. "Lex Orandi, Lex Credendi." In Tyrrell, *Through Scylla and Charybdis*, 85–105. Original: "The Relation of Theology to Devotion." *The Month* 94 (Nov. 1899): 461–73.
- [Tyrrell, George]= "Halifax." "The Recent Anglo-Roman Pastoral." *Nineteenth Century* 49 (May 1901): 736–54.
- [Tyrrell, George]. "The Bible-Question in France," *Monthly Register* 1 (Oct. 1902): 277–78.
- . Unsigned review of Albert Houtin, *La Question biblique chez les Catholiques de France au XIX<sup>e</sup> siècle*. Paris: Picard, 1902.
- . "Limitations of Newman." *The Monthly Register* 1 (Oct. 1902): 264–65. Unsigned article.
- [Tyrrell, George]= "Hilaire Bourdon." *The Church and the Future (L'Eglise et l'Avenir)*. Private printing, 1903. Reprinted by Maude Petre, Hampstead: Priory Press, 1910.
- Tyrrell, George. "Religion and Ethics." *The Month* 101 (Feb. 1903): 130–45.
- . *Lex Orandi, or Prayer and Creed*. London: Longmans, Green and Co., 1904.
- . "Semper Eadem (I)." In Tyrrell, *Through Scylla and Charybdis*, 106–32. Original: "Semper Eadem." *The Month* 103 (Jan. 1904): 1–17.
- . "The Rights and Limits of Theology." In Tyrrell, *Through Scylla and Charybdis*, 200–41. Original: *Quarterly Review* 203 (Oct. 1905): 461–91.
- . "Semper Eadem (II)." In Tyrrell, *Through Scylla and Charybdis*, 133–54. Original: "The Limits of the Theory of Development." *Catholic World* 81 (Sept. 1905): 730–44.
- . *A Much-Abused Letter*. London: Longmans, Green and Co., 1906.
- . "Introduction" to Henri Bremond, *The Mystery of Newman*, translated by H.C. Corrance. London: Williams and Norgate, 1907.
- . "Revelation." in Tyrrell, *Through Scylla and Charybdis*, 264–307.
- . "Theologism—A Reply." In Tyrrell, *Through Scylla and Charybdis*, 308–54.
- . *Through Scylla and Charybdis or The Old Theology and the New*. London: Longmans, Green and Co., 1907.

- . *Medievalism: A Reply to Cardinal Mercier*. London: Longmans, Green and Co., 1908.
- . "Mediaevalism and Modernism." *HTR* 1 (July 1908): 304–24.
- . "Prospects of Modernism." *Hibbert Journal* 6.2 (Jan. 1908): 241–55.
- . *Christianity at the Cross-Roads*. London: Longmans, Green and Co., 1909.
- . "The Abiding Value of the Apocalyptic Idea." In Tyrrell, *Christianity at the Cross-Roads*, 91–104.
- . "The Apocalyptic Vision and the Catholic Church." In Tyrrell, *Christianity at the Cross-Roads*, 210–20.
- . "The Apocalyptic Vision of Christ." In Tyrrell, *Christianity at the Cross-Roads*, 114–209.
- . "The Christ of Catholicism." In Tyrrell, *Christianity at the Cross-Roads*, 62–90.
- . "The Christ of Liberal Protestantism." In Tyrrell, *Christianity at the Cross-Roads*, 39–45.
- . "The Church and Its Future." In Tyrrell, *Christianity at the Cross-Roads*, 274–82.
- . "First Results of New Testament Criticism." In Tyrrell, *Christianity at the Cross-Roads*, 35–38.
- . "Newman's Theory of Development." In Tyrrell, *Christianity at the Cross-Roads*, 29–34.
- . "The Old Orthodoxy." In Tyrrell, *Christianity at the Cross-Roads*, 14–20.
- . "The Religion and Personality of Jesus." In Tyrrell, *Christianity at the Cross-Roads*, 261–73.
- . *George Tyrrell's Letters*, selected and edited by M.D. Petre. London: T. Fisher Unwin, 1920.
- . "Revelation as Experience." In Thomas M. Loome "George Tyrrell: 'Revelation as Experience,'" *HeyJ* 12.2 (April 1971): 117–49.
- . *Letters from a "Modernist": The Letters of George Tyrrell to Wilfrid Ward, 1893–1908*, edited by Mary Jo Weaver. Shepherdstown, WVa: Patmos Press, 1981.
- . *A Jesuit Friendship: Letters of George Tyrrell to Herbert Thurston*, edited by Robert Butterworth. Digby Stuart, U.K.: Roehampton Institute, 1988.
- Vidler, Alex R. *The Modernist Movement in the Roman Church: Its Origins and Outcome*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1934.
- Weaver, Mary Jo. "George Tyrrell and the Joint Pastoral Letter." *DR* 99.334 (Jan. 1981): 18–39.
- Weiss, Johannes. *Die Predigt Jesu vom Reiche Gottes*. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1892. Translated by Richard H. Hiers and D. Larrimore Holland as *Jesus' Proclamation of the Kingdom of God*. Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1971.

# Male-Centred Christology and Female Cultic Incapability: Women's *Impedimentum sexus*

*Kari Elisabeth Børresen*

## 1 Feminist Revolution and Androcentric Collapse

It is essential to observe that modern feminism, which claims the bio-socio-cultural equivalence of women and men, results from the greatest epistemological revolution in human history. This recent collapse of global androcentrism represents a more fundamental challenge to all age-old world religions than the previous upheavals of geocentrism (Copernicus) and anthropocentrism (Darwin). In fact, no actualisation of gender equivalence is documented in any society before the twentieth-century European welfare states.

In order to understand the revolutionary impact of modern feminism, it is necessary to emphasise that all global religions are fundamentally androcentric. According to Asian Hinduism and Buddhism, women are not properly human beings, but placed between men and animals by the universal wheel of reincarnation and rebirth, which is determined by the ethical performance in previous lives. This ontological gender hierarchy reappears in the creation myth of Plato's *Timaeus* (41d–42d; and 90e–91), a central text in the European history of ideas. According to the variants of Near Eastern monotheism, Judaism, Christianity, and Islam, each human being has only one terrestrial existence. Given the fundamental paradigm of *one* God who creates *two* different sexes, with gender-specific, non-interchangeable functions and roles, women are included in humankind, but as subordinate members. This means that female humanity is created to serve men's procreation of offspring. Consequently, the axiomatic precedence of male humanity is defined in functional, but not in ontological terms.<sup>1</sup>

---

1 Kari Elisabeth Børresen, ed., *Christian and Islamic Gender Models in Formative Traditions, Studi e Testi TardoAntichi*, vol. 2. (Rome: Herder Editrice, 2004).



## 2 From Androcentric Axiom to Ecumenical Obstacle

Until the Second Vatican Council (1962–1965), only a few Catholic theologians questioned women's subordinate position in the church. Already in 1962, the Catholic feminist pioneer Gertrud Heinzelmann, a Swiss jurist and member of St Joan's International Alliance, sent a protest-petition to the conciliar preparatory commission, where she perspicaciously denounced women's inferior status in the church, with focus on the cultic impediment of female humanity.<sup>2</sup> After Vatican II, feminist Catholic theology was initiated in Europe, where the German medievalist Elisabeth Gössmann and myself are pioneers.<sup>3</sup> From the 1970s onward, European and North-American colleagues followed.<sup>4</sup> Theological gender studies soon became central in research on religion and Christianity.

Finally accepting the ecumenical movement, Roman Catholic dialogue with Protestant denominations started after the Second Vatican Council. Here, women's recent equivalence with men in western civil society was commonly recognised. Therefore, male and female lay people were attributed equal rights and duties in the updated *Codex Iuris Canonici* (1983), so that the age-old gender asymmetry of marriage suddenly disappeared.<sup>5</sup> Nevertheless, the gender-specific male priesthood is preserved in canon 1024, which literally repeats canon 689, # 1 of the *Codex Iuris Canonici* (1917): "*Sacram ordinationem valide recipit solus vir baptizatus* (only a baptised man can receive valid ordination)."

When women obtained cultic capability in the Presbyterian, Lutheran, and Anglican churches, this persistent Catholic and Orthodox exclusion of women

2 Gertrud Heinzelmann, *Wir schweigen nicht länger. Frauen äusseren sich zum II. Vatikanischen Konzil* (Zürich: Interfeminas Verlag, 1964); and eadem, *Die geheiligte Diskriminierungen* (Bonstetten: Interfeminas Verlag, 1986).

3 Elisabeth Gössmann, *Metaphysik und Heilsgeschichte. Eine theologische Untersuchung der Summa Halensis* (Munich: M. Hueber, 1964), has a chapter on Alexander of Hales' gender models. My *Subordination et Equivalence. Nature et rôle de la femme d'après Augustin et Thomas d'Aquin* was published in Oslo/Paris in 1968. Updated English edition, *Subordination and Equivalence. The Nature and Role of Woman in Augustine and Thomas Aquinas. A Reprint of a Pioneering Classic* (Kampen: KokPharos, 1995).

4 Other influential Catholic feminist theologians in Europe: Catharina J.M. Halkes (died 2004); Anne Jensen (died 2008); Ursula King; Cettina Militello; Marinella Perroni; Helen Schüngel-Straumann; and Adriana Valerio. In the United States of America: Anne E. Carr (died 2008); Margaret A. Farley; Elizabeth A. Johnson; Rosemary R. Ruether; Sandra H. Schneiders; and Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza.

5 Gertrude Reidick, *Die hierarchische Struktur der Ehe*, Münchener theologische Studien, III, Kanonische Abteilung, Bd 3 (Munich: EOS Verlag, 1953).



from priestly and episcopal ordination became a fundamental obstacle to Christian unity. A significant example of the ingenious circumvention of the consequent ecumenical deadlock is provided by the Lutheran—Roman Catholic Commission on Unity (1995–2006). Otherwise, the Lutheran World Federation could not have pursued its dialogue with the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity. The Commission's Study Document on *The Apostolicity of the Church* states:

The Commission agreed from the beginning not to take up a point of serious difference between Lutherans and Catholics, namely, the ordination of women to the pastoral ministry and their appointment to the episcopal office. The Lutheran members of the Commission emphasize, however, that when the text speaks of 'ministry' they have in mind men as well as women as office bearers.<sup>6</sup>

### 3 Doctrinal Formation of Christian Gender Models

In order to understand the obstinate Vatican ban on female ordination, it is necessary to analyse the historical elaboration of Christian anthropology. In fact, traditional doctrine and symbolism were constructed in Christian antiquity, when women's biological and socio-cultural inferiority was axiomatic. According to classical doctrine, functional gender hierarchy is established by God from creation and remains normative for human existence on earth. Redemptive gender equivalence belongs to the order of salvation and can only be realised by eschatological re-creation.<sup>7</sup>

Christian anthropology defines fully human status as being created in God's image. From a feminist perspective, it is essential to recognise that female humanity received creational *imago Dei* through historically shifting, inculturated exegesis of core biblical texts (Gen 1:26–27; 2:7, 18–24; 1 Cor 11:7; Gal 3:28; and Eph 4:13). This doctrinal process, which was elaborated from early Christianity to the twentieth century, can be summarily outlined in three stages: from manlike Godhead and God-like maleness, via metasexual

6 *The Apostolicity of the Church. Study Document of the Lutheran-Roman Catholic Commission on Unity* (Minneapolis, Minn.: Lutheran University Press, 2006), 11.

7 Børresen, *Subordination and Equivalence*.

Godhead and asexual *imago Dei*, to holistic God-likeness describing God with both male and female metaphors.<sup>8</sup>

#### 4 God-Like Male Humanity

In contemporary biblical interpretation, there is an apologetical tendency to obscure the fact that Pauline texts clearly indicate women's lack of creational God-likeness. Lone Fatum's detailed and accurate study demonstrates that only men are created in God's image and therefore have God-willed religious and bio-social authority over women:

It has often been maintained that 1 Cor 11:3–9 only indirectly or implicitly denies the participation of woman in the human prerogative of being created in the image of God, and that it is due to a later, more misogynist tradition that the Pauline formulations in vv. 3 and 7 have been turned into an explicit and exclusive doctrine of the imperfection and inferiority of woman. However, this interpretation of the Pauline intention, as expressed in 11:3–9, cannot be substantiated. . . . On the contrary, Paul takes it for granted that woman is indeed not of God's image; for he relates 11:3–9 to Gen 1:26–27a instead of 1:27b–28, indicating without any discussion that woman is not included in original humanity nor, of course, in God's image.<sup>9</sup>

Against the widespread emancipatory interpretation of a pre-Pauline baptismal formula, Fatum specifies that Galatians 3:28c is a negated citation of Genesis 1:27b (LXX): “defining the annulment of sexuality in Christ as the eschatological affirmation of life, i.e. as the eschatological re-establishment of Gen 1:27a (LXX). This does not allow Christian women any opportunity of being affirmed as women, but fixes them in a state of asexuality dependent on the androcentric concept of human normality.”<sup>10</sup>

The initial stage of God-like maleness corresponds to an andromorphic concept of God, where the human prototype is male, so that Adam is created

8 This process is analysed from Genesis to the twentieth century in Kari Elisabeth Børresen, ed., *The Image of God: Gender Models in Judaeo-Christian Tradition* (Minneapolis, Minn.: Fortress Press, 1995).

9 Lone Fatum, “Image of God and Glory of Man: Women in the Pauline Congregations,” in Børresen, *The Image of God*, 71.

10 *Ibid.*, 79.

in God's image. A clear-cut example is the so-called Ambrosiaster, who firmly negates that women have creational *imago Dei*.<sup>11</sup> Combining Genesis 1:26–27a and 2:7, he emphasises Adam's God-likeness by comparing monotheism and monogenism: "Man is the image of God because one God made one man, so that just as all things are from the one God, so the entire human race comes from the one man."<sup>12</sup> This juxtaposition of theocentrism and androcentrism, where one man-like God creates one God-like man, explains that Adam transmits his image quality to all human males, whereas all human females inherit Eve's subservience. Ambrosiaster immediately invokes 1 Corinthians 11:7 to state that woman has to be veiled, "*quia non est imago Dei*." The same argumentation appears in his commentary on Paul, with emphasis on women's subjection to God-like men: "This is why woman ought to veil her head, because she is not the image of God and must be displayed as subject to man."<sup>13</sup> This doctrine of men's gender-specific *imago Dei* was valid into the fifth century, but persisted in medieval canon law (*Decreti secunda pars, causa XXXIII, 5,13,17, and 19*). Here, Ambrosiaster's cited texts were attributed to Ambrose or Augustine, and invoked to justify women's bio-social inferiority and the consequent cultic incapability of female humanity, precisely termed *impedimentum sexus*.<sup>14</sup>

- 
- 11 David G. Hunter, "The Paradise of Patriarchy: Ambrosiaster on Woman as (not) God's Image," *JTS* n.s. 43 (1992): 447–69; and Kari Elisabeth Børresen, "God's Image, Man's Image? Patristic Interpretation of Gen. 1,27 and 1 Cor. 11,7," in Børresen, *The Image of God*, 187–209.
- 12 Ambrosiaster, *Lib. quaest. uet. et nou. test.* 21 (CSEL 50.47–48): "Hoc est imaginem dei factum esse hominem, quia unus unum fecit, ut sicut ab uno deo sunt omnia, ita et ab uno homine omne genus humanum."
- 13 Idem, *Ad Cor. primam* 11.10 (CSEL 81/2.122): "Mulier ergo idcirco debet uelare caput, quia non est imago dei, sed ut ostendatur subiecta."
- 14 Kari Elisabeth Børresen, "Imago Dei, privilège masculin? Interprétation augustinienne et pseudo-augustinienne de Gen. 1,27 et 1 Cor. 11,7," *Aug 25* (1985): 213–34 and eadem, "God's Image, is Woman Excluded? Medieval Interpretation of Gen. 1,27 and 1 Cor. 11,7," in Børresen, *The Image of God*, 210–35. Concerning women's *impedimentum sexus* in medieval canon law see Alastair J. Minnis, "De impedimento sexus: Women's Bodies and Medieval Impediments to Female Ordination," in *Medieval Theology and the Natural Body*, ed. Peter Biller and Alastair J. Minnis (York: York Medieval Press, 1997), 109–39; Gary Macy, "The Ordination of Women in the Early Middle Ages," *TS* 61 (2000): 481–597; idem, *The Hidden History of Women's Ordination: Female Clergy in the Medieval West* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007); John Hilary Martin, "The Ordination of Women and the Theologians in the Middle Ages," in *A History of Women and Ordination*, vol. 1: *The Ordination of Women in a Medieval Context*, ed. Bernard Cooke and Gary Macy (Lanham, Md and London: Scarecrow Press, 2002), 31–175; and Ida Raming, *A History of Women and Ordination*, vol. 2: *The Priestly Office of Women—God's Gift to a Renewed Church*, edited

## 5 Women's 'Becoming Male' in Christ

In early Christianity, both women and men are saved through baptism, in order to be restored by resurrection. Since Christ is incarnated in perfect male humanity, women's salvational equality is realised by 'becoming male' through redemptive incorporation into Christ (Rom 8:29; Gal 3:26–27; Col 3:10–11; and Eph 4:13). Kari Vogt has analysed this sex-change metaphor in Gnostic, Christian, and Islamic sources. Here, the transformation from female inferiority to male perfection is based on axiomatic gender hierarchy: "In the Gnostic as well as in the Christian texts, the dominant metaphor of change is the 'woman turned into man' variant, expressing spiritual progress and salvation."<sup>15</sup> This necessity of 'becoming male' as a prerequisite to and a consequence of women's redemptive conformity with the new Adam, Christ, is succinctly expressed in the so-called Gospel of Thomas, logion 114: "Simon Peter said to them, let Mary (of Magdala) leave us, for women are not worthy of Life. Jesus said, I myself shall lead her in order to make her male, so that she too may become a living spirit (Gen 2:7) resembling you males. For every woman who makes herself male will enter the Kingdom of Heaven."

Women's virtuous achievement of Christ-like maleness is clearly demonstrated by two famous female martyrs, Blandina (died 177/178) and Vibia Perpetua (died 203). According to a letter written by the communities of Lyon and Vienne about their martyrs, sent to the churches in Asia and Phrygia, which is preserved in Eusebius of Caesarea's *Historia ecclesiastica*, the feeble slave-woman Blandina is transformed into a Christ-like athlete:

Blandina was hung on a post and exposed as bait for the wild animals that were let loose on her. She seemed to hang there in the form of a cross, and by her fervent prayer she aroused intense enthusiasm in those who were undergoing their ordeal, for in their torment with their physical eyes they saw in the person of their sister him who was crucified for them, that he might convince all who believe in him that all who suffer for Christ's glory will have eternal fellowship in the living God. But none of the animals had touched her, and so she was taken down from the post and brought back to the gaol to be preserved for another ordeal: . . . and tiny, weak and insignificant as she was she would give inspiration to her

---

and translated by Bernard Cooke and Gary Macy, 2nd ed. (Lanham, Md: Scarecrow Press, 2004).

15 Kari Vogt, " 'Becoming Male': A Gnostic and Early Christian Metaphor," in Børresen, *The Image of God*, 171.

brothers, for she had put on Christ, that mighty and invincible athlete, and had overcome the Adversary in many contests, and through her conflict had won the crown of immortality.<sup>16</sup>

In Vibia Perpetua's diary, preserved in *Passio sanctarum Perpetuae et Felicitatis*, she dreams that she becomes a male athlete before the final battle against the devil in shape of an Egyptian: "My clothes were stripped off, and suddenly I was a man."<sup>17</sup> Preaching in honour of Perpetua's martyrdom, Augustine invokes the Christ-like *uir perfectus* of Ephesians 4:13.<sup>18</sup> In fact, this biblical text is often referred to when Greek and Latin church fathers praise the manly virtue of female ascetics. By opting for virginity or widowhood, these defeminised women could escape the creational inferiority of bio-social femaleness already in the present world. This liberatory device is focused in the exemplary lives of rich and aristocratic ladies, like Olympias and Melania *iunior*.<sup>19</sup>

The androcentric ideal of 'becoming male' was eagerly internalised by female ascetics, as demonstrated in two *Sayings* attributed to the Egyptian desert mother, *amma* Sarra, preserved among *Apophthegmata patrum*.<sup>20</sup> One text tells of two important monks who came to visit her. On their way, they conspire to humiliate her and say: "Be careful not to become conceited

16 Eusebius, *Hist. eccl.* 5.1.41–42 (SC 41.17): ἡ δὲ Βλανθὶνα ἐπὶ ξύλου κρεμασθεῖσα προύκειτο βορὰ τῶν εἰσβαλλομένων θηρίων· ἡ καὶ διὰ τοῦ βλέπεσθαι σταυροῦ σχήματι κρεμαμένη διὰ τῆς εὐτόνου προσευχῆς πολλὴν προθυμίαν τοῖς ἀγωνιζομένοις ἐνεποίει, βλεπόντων αὐτῶν ἐν τῷ ἀγῶνι, καὶ τοῖς ἔξωθεν ὀφθαλμοῖς διὰ τῆς ἀδελφῆς τὸν ὑπὲρ αὐτῶν ἐσταυρωμένον, ἵνα πείσῃ τοὺς πιστεύοντας εἰς αὐτὸν ὅτι πᾶς ὁ ὑπὲρ τῆς Χριστοῦ δόξης παθὼν τὴν κοινωνίαν αἰεὶ ἔχει μετὰ τοῦ ζῶντος θεοῦ. καὶ μηδενὸς ἀψαμένου τότε τῶν θηρίων αὐτῆς, καθαιρεθεῖσα ἀπὸ τοῦ ξύλου ἀνελήφθη πάλιν εἰς τὴν εἰρκτήν, εἰς ἄλλον ἀγῶνα τηρουμένη, ἵνα διὰ πλειόνων γυμνασμάτων νικήσασα, τῷ μὲν σκολιῷ ὄφει ἀπαραίτητον ποιῆσῃ τὴν καταδίκεν, προτρέψῃται δὲ τοὺς ἀδελφούς, ἡ μικρὰ καὶ ἀσθενὴς καὶ εὐκαταφρόνητος μέγαν καὶ ἀκαταγώνιστον ἀθλητὴν Χριστὸν ἐνδεδυμένη, διὰ πολλῶν κλήρων ἐκβιάσασα τὸν ἀντικείμενον καὶ δι' ἀγῶνος τὸν τῆς ἀφθαρσίας στεψαμένη στέφανον. English translation from Herbert Musurillo, ed., *The Acts of the Christian Martyrs* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1972).

17 *Pass. Perp. Fel.* 10.7 (Musurillo, *The Acts of the Christian Martyrs*, 118–19): "et expoliata sum et facta sum masculus."

18 Augustine, *Sermo* 281.2 (NBA 33.106).

19 Elizabeth A. Clark, *Ascetic Piety and Women's Faith: Essays on Late Ancient Christianity*, Studies in Women and Religion, vol. 20 (Lewiston, N.Y.: Edward Mellen Press, 1986); and Susanna Elm, *Virgins of God: The Making of Asceticism in Late Antiquity*, OCM (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994).

20 Kari Vogt, "The Desert Mothers: Female Ascetism in Egypt from the 4th to the 6th Century," in Kari Elisabeth Børresen and Kari Vogt, *Women's Studies of the Christian and Islamic Traditions* (Dordrecht: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 1993), 103–216.

thinking to yourself: Look how anchorites are coming to see me, a mere woman.' But Amma Sarra said to them, 'According to nature I am a woman, but not according to my thoughts.'<sup>21</sup> Here, the holy *amma* contrasts her female nature (*physis*) and her male mind (*logismos*), in order to emphasise that her outward femaleness does not correspond to the interior perfection of her mind. This point is made even clearer in another text, where she addresses some properly conceited monks: "She said to the brothers, 'I am a man, you who are women.'<sup>22</sup> The *amma's* statement reveals that charismatic authority belongs to the human being whose inner life is most advanced, and that this authority is independent of both sex and official rank.

## 6 Asexual God-Likeness

The second doctrinal stage of asexual God-likeness corresponds to a meta-sexual concept of God, which was structured from the third to the fifth centuries by Greek and Latin church fathers. Based on Platonic anthropology, they redefined human *imago Dei* in terms of a sexless privilege, linked to the incorporeal and consequently immortal soul. Also influenced by Stoic ethics, where human females and even slaves have reason and virtue, these patristic authors could 'backdate' women's spiritual *imago Dei* already to creation, despite the axiomatic incompatibility of Godhead and femaleness. In consequence, creational gender hierarchy remains normative in this world.

Clement of Alexandria connects the sexual division in Genesis 1:27b to the God-like male prototype in Genesis 1:26–27a, invoking the Christomorphic asexuality of Galatians 3:28 as a proof-text. This means that God-like women share men's spiritual nature and moral capability, but differ from exemplary maleness by their female corporeality. In spite of this sexless concept of God's image, Clement regularly describes moral and intellectual perfection with reference to Ephesians 4:13, in the sense of virile prowess. Salvational Christ-likeness in perfect manhood is thus achieved by conquering womanish lust

21 *Apophtheg. coll. alph. Sarra* 4 (PG 65.420): βλέπε μὴ ἐπαρθῆ ὁ λογισμὸς σου, καὶ εἴπῃς, ὅτι Ἰδοὺ οἱ ἀναχωρηταὶ πρὸς μεῖς ἔρχονται γυναῖκα οὖσαν. Λέγει αὐτοῖς ἡ ἀμμάς Σάρρα· Τῇ μὲν φύσει γυνή εἰμι, ἀλλ' οὐ τῷ λογισμῷ. English translation from Benedicta Ward, *The Sayings of the Desert Fathers: The Alphabetical Collection*, 2nd ed. (Kalamazoo, Mich.: Cistercian Publications, 1984).

22 *Ibid.*, 9 (Jean-Claude Guy, ed., *Recherches sur la tradition grecque des Apophthegmata patrum*, *Subsidia Hagiographica*, vol. 36 [Brussels: Société des Bollandistes, 1962], 34): Εἶπε πάλιν τοῖς ἀδελφοῖς· ἐγὼ εἰμι ἀνὴρ, ὑμεῖς δὲ ἐστε γυναῖκες.

through Stoic insensibility to passion. Clement's praise of asexual virtue and intellect in manlike disguise means that spiritually God-like women are promoted to honorary maleness.

The leading Greek church father, Gregory of Nyssa, includes women in theomorphic humanity by defining God's image as a presexual privilege. Gregory's interpretation is a mitigated variant of encratite protology, where the original human perfection is either all-male, presexual, or asexual. It follows that sexual differentiation, or more precisely, femaleness, is explained as a cause or consequence of primeval sin.<sup>23</sup> The corollary dualist scheme of 'double creation' reappears in Gregory's two-stage theory: the first creation in God's image is purely spiritual and described in Genesis 1:26–27a. This presexual and therefore perfect humanity will be restored in the order of redemption. The second creation of male and female bodies described in Genesis 1:27b–28 is connected to the formation of Adam and his woman, as expressed in Genesis 2:7, 18, and 21–23. Gregory believed that this introduction of animal physicality is motivated by God's foreknowledge of the first sin, so that sub-human mortality is a consequence of the fall and must be counter-acted by sub-human fertility. Paradoxically, Gregory's divisive anthropology is egalitarian in the sense that Adam's formation is placed on the same secondary level as the formation of his female helper. In consequence, the axiomatic link between God-like humanity and exemplary maleness is abolished. The man-centred combination of Genesis 1:26–27a and 2:7, as expressed in 1 Corinthians 11:7, is therefore alien to Gregory's thought. Inversely, he invokes Galatians 3:28 in terms of presexual God-likeness, to be restored in Christ by reverting to initial perfection, before the creation of male and female bodies. It is important to observe that Gregory's 'double creation' was repeated by major Greek theologians, like Maximus the Confessor and John of Damascus, to be upheld in the Orthodox tradition throughout the Middle Ages.

## 7 Embodied Creation, Sexless *Imago Dei*

The leading Latin church father, Augustine of Hippo, gradually managed to affirm the unicity of God's creation. In *De Genesi ad litteram*, he combined the instantaneous *informatio* described in Genesis 1 and the successive *conformatio* described in Genesis 2. The first creation story shows that the souls of Adam and Eve were made in definitive form, whereas all other human beings are

23 Giulia Sfameni Gasparro, "Image of God and Sexual Differentiation in the Tradition of Enkrateia," in Børresen, *The Image of God*, 134–69.



created in germ form, as *rationes seminales*. The second creation story concerns God's formation of the first couple's bodies and the continuous deployment of all living creatures throughout the ages. This exegetical device permits Augustine to connect the sexual difference (Gen 1:27b) and the preceding image-text (Gen 1:26–27a), so that the corporeal formation of Adam (Gen 2:7) and his female helpmate (Gen 2:28, and 21–23) is linked to the creation of God-like humanity. Nevertheless, this inclusive interpretation does not affect the functional gender hierarchy established by God in creation. On the contrary, Augustine underlined that the purpose for creating Adam's woman is strictly sexual: "For these reasons I cannot work out what help a wife could have been made to provide a man with, if you take away the purpose of childbearing."<sup>24</sup> He argued that another man would have been a better friend and companion of Adam. In consequence, the creational subordination of female humanity remains normative in this world, only to be overcome by eschatological equivalence in heaven.<sup>25</sup>

Augustine was the first church father who directly confronts 1 Corinthians 11:7, refusing to accept this text as literally affirming men's exclusive God-likeness. Therefore, he resorts to allegorical exegesis, explaining that Paul's God-like *uir* signifies the superior element of the human soul, which is dedicated to the contemplation of eternal truth, in contradistinction to Paul's non theomorphic *mulier*, who represents the soul's inferior element and is charged with earthly matters. Nevertheless, by invoking Colossians 3:10–11 and Galatians 3:2–28, Augustine goes on to 'backdate' women's salvational God-likeness to the order of creation, since also *femina* is a theomorphic human being, *homo*, in her rational soul. This means that Augustine, despite his effort to overcome the encratite duality of creation, keeps the Platonised definition of *imago Dei* as incorporeal and therefore asexual. The ensuing incoherence of Augustine's anthropology becomes particularly visible in his 'feminist' effort to include women in creational God-likeness.<sup>26</sup> Augustine's uneasy argumentation is clearly exposed in *De Genesi ad litteram*:

24 Augustine, *De Gen. ad litt.* 9.5.9 (NBA 9/2.458–60): "Quapropter non inuenio, ad quod adiutorium facta sit mulier uiro, si pariendi causa subtrahitur." English translation from Edmund Hill, *Saint Augustine: On Genesis*, WSA, vol. 1/13 (Hyde Park, N.Y.: New City Press, 2002).

25 Kari Elisabeth Børresen, "La Féminologie d'Augustin," in *From Patristics to Matristics: Selected Articles on Christian Gender Models by Kari Elisabeth Børresen*, ed. Øyvind Norderval and Katrine Lund Ore (Rome: Herder Editrice, 2002), 61–89.

26 Kari Elisabeth Børresen, "Patristic 'Feminism': The Case of Augustine," *Augustinian Studies* 25 (1994): 137–52.



And so, although this external diversity of sex in the bodies of two human beings symbolizes what is to be understood internally in the one mind of a single human being, still the female too, because it is simply in the body that she is female, is also being renewed in the spirit of her mind in the recognition of God according to the image of him who created that in which there is no male and female. Now just as women are not cut off from this grace of the renewal and reshaping of the image of God, although their bodily sex has a different symbolic signification, according to which the man alone is called 'the image and glory of God,' by the same token too in that original creation of man in terms of which 'man' included woman as well, the woman of course also had her mind, a mind endowed with reason, with respect to which she too was made to the image of God.<sup>27</sup>

This combined exegesis of Genesis 1:26–27, 1 Corinthians 11:7, and Galatians 3:28 is based on the axiomatic disparity between femaleness and God-likeness, with corollary gender hierarchy. It follows that female human beings are theomorphic in spite of their bodily sex, whereas men's spiritual *imago Dei* corresponds to their exemplary maleness. The resulting split between women's asexual God-likeness and their sub-male corporeality is further exposed in *De Trinitate*. Augustine cites Genesis 1: 26–27b in order to affirm that human nature itself, which is complete in both sexes, has been made to the image of God. In consequence, woman (*femina*) is not excluded from being understood as God's image. It follows that Augustine has to explain man's exclusive God-likeness according to 1 Corinthians 11:7:

So how are we to take what we have heard from the apostle, that the man is the image of God, and so he is forbidden to cover his head, but the woman is not and so she is told to do so? In the same way, I believe, as what I said when I was dealing with the nature of the human mind,

---

27 Augustine, *De Gen. ad litt.* 3.22.34 (NBA 9/2.): "Itaque quamuis hoc in duobus hominibus diuersi sexus exterius secundum corpus figuratum sit, quod etiam in una hominis interius mente intellegitur, tamen et femina, quia corpore femina est, renouatur etiam ipsa in spiritu mentis suae in agnitionem Dei secundum imaginem eius, qui creauit, ubi non est masculus et femina. Sicut enim ab hac gratia renouationis et reformatione imaginis Dei non separantur feminae, quamuis in sexu corporis earum aliud figuratum sit, secundum quod uir solus dicitur esse imago et gloria Dei; sic et in ipsa prima conditione hominis secundum id, quod et femina homo erat, habebat utique mentem suam eamdemque rationalem secundum quam ipsa quoque facta est ad imaginem Dei."

namely that the woman with her husband is the image of God in such a way that the whole of that substance is one image, but when she is assigned her function of being an assistant, which is her concern alone, she is not the image of God; whereas in what concerns the man alone he is the image of God as fully and completely as when the woman is joined to him in one whole. We said about the nature of the human mind that if it is all contemplating truth it is the image of God; and when something is drawn off from it and assigned or directed in a certain way to the management of temporal affairs, it is still all the same the image of God as regards the part with which it consults the truth it has gazed on; but as regards the part which is directed to managing these lower affairs, it is not the image of God.<sup>28</sup>

Augustine's acrobatic exegesis serves to include women in creational God-likeness despite their female lack of *imago Dei*.

This basic incoherence is evident in a commentary on Galatians 3:28, which was regularly cited in medieval theology. Augustine emphasised that the redemptive equivalence of Gentiles, slaves, and women, obtained in union with Christ, does not abolish the racial, social and sexual inequality in this world:

that difference, whether of peoples or of legal status or of sex, while indeed already removed in the unity of faith, remains in this mortal life. That this order is to be observed on this life's journey is the teaching of the apostles, who hand down very salutary rules as to how Christians should

---

28 Augustine, *De Trin.* 12.7.10 (NBA 4.476): "Quomodo ergo per apostolum audiimus uirum esse imaginem Dei, unde caput uelare prohibetur, mulierem autem non, et ideo ipsa hoc facere iubetur nisi, credo, illud esse quod iam dixi, cum de natura humanae mentis agerem, mulierem cum uiro suo esse imaginem Dei, ut una imago sit tota illa substantia; cum autem ad adiutorium distribuitur, quod ad eam ipsam solam attinet, non est imago Dei; quod autem ad uirum solum attinet, imago Deo est, tam plena atque integra, quam in unum coniuncta muliere. Sicut de natura humanae mentis diximus, quia et si tota contempletur ueritatem, imago Dei est; et cum ex ea distribuitur aliquid, et quadam intentione deriuatur ad actionem rerum temporalium, nihilominus ex qua parte conspexit ueritatem, imago Dei est; ex qua uero intenditur in agenda inferiora, non est imago Dei." English translation from Edmund Hill, *Saint Augustine: The Trinity (De Trinitate)*, WSA, vol. 1/5 (Hyde Park, N.Y.: New City Press, 1991).

live together with regard to differences of people (Jews and Greeks), status (masters and slaves), sex (husbands and wives), and the like. . . .<sup>29</sup>

Augustine was also the first church father who explicitly affirms that women will resurrect as female human beings. In *De ciuitate Dei*, Augustine interprets the Christ-like *uir perfectus* of Ephesians 4:13 in terms of human fulfilment, according to inclusive *homo* of Genesis 1:26–27b and creational wholeness as expressed in Genesis 2:7, 18, and 21–23. Since human femaleness is part of God's unique creation, women will not be restored to God-like humanity by resurrecting in perfect manhood. Consequently, women shall resurrect as female human beings, although their instrumental role for men's procreation will be superseded:

Now a woman's sex is not a defect; it is natural. And in the resurrection it will be free of the necessity of intercourse and childbirth. However, the female organs will not subserve their former use; they will be part of a new beauty, which will not excite the lust of the beholder—there will be no lust in that life—but will arouse the praises of God for his wisdom and compassion, in that he not only created out of nothing but freed from corruption that which he had created.<sup>30</sup>

29 Augustine, *Exp. Gal.* 28 (NBA 10/2.616): “differentia ista uel gentium uel conditionis uel sexus iam quidem ablata est ab unitate fidei, sed manet in conuersatione mortali eiusque ordinem in huius uitae itinere seruandum esse et apostoli praecipunt, qui etiam regulas saluberrimas tradunt, quemadmodum secum uiuant pro differentia gentis Iudaei et Graeci et pro differentia conditionis domini et serui et pro differentia sexus uiri et uxores, uel si qua talia cetera occurrunt.” English translation from Eric Plumer, *Augustine's Commentary on Galatians: Introduction, Text, Translation, and Notes*, OECs (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003). Latin commentaries on Gal 3:28 are analysed by Karla Pollmann, “‘Non est masculus et femina’. Gal 3,28 in Kommentarauslegungen des 4./5. und des 20. Jahrhunderts: Ein nicht eingelöstes Vermächtnis?,” in *Spiritus et Littera. Beiträge zur Augustinus-Forschung*, ed. Guntram Förster, Andreas E.J. Grote, and Christof Müller, Festschrift zum 80. Geburtstag von Cornelius Petrus Mayer, OSA (Würzburg: Echter Verlag, 2009), 681–95.

30 Augustine, *De ciu. Dei* 22.17 (NBA 5/3.364): “Non est autem uitium sexus femineus, sed natura, quae tunc quidem et a concubitu et a partu immunis erit; erunt tamen membra feminea, non accommodata usui ueteri, sed decori nouo, quo non alliciatur aspicientis concupiscentia, quae nulla erit, sed Dei laudetur sapientia atque clementia, qui et quod non erat fecit et liberauit a corruptione quod fecit.” English translation from Henry Bettenson, *St Augustine: City of God*, Penguin Classics (London: Penguin Books, 1984).

Finally, Augustine rejects previous encratite interpretations of Matthew 22:30 and Luke 20:34–36, in terms of all-male or sexless bliss in heaven: “Thus Christ denies the existence of marriage in the resurrected life; he does not deny the existence of women in heaven.”<sup>31</sup> Augustine’s strenuous affirmation of protological unity and eschatological wholeness remains a major contribution to the Christian tradition.<sup>32</sup> Nevertheless, the Patristic interaction of metasexual God and asexual *imago Dei* became dominant in medieval doctrine, to remain standard in Catholic doctrine until Vatican II.

## 8 Matristic Inculturation

The current stage of holistic God-likeness, where both women and men are created in God’s image *qua* human males or females, was anticipated by Northern European church mothers, from the twelfth to the fifteenth centuries.<sup>33</sup> These matristic authors had internalised that all human beings are created in God’s image, but they did not invoke the correlated ideas of ‘becoming male’ in Christ or receiving sexless *imago Dei*. On the contrary, they perspicaciously understood the basic interaction between the concept of God and God-like humanity. Therefore, the German abbess Hildegard of Bingen (declared *doctor ecclesiae* in 2012) and the English anchoress Julian of Norwich sought to provide a divine model of female *imago Dei* by describing God with female metaphors. In Hildegard’s *Scivias*, God’s revelatory Wisdom (*Sapientia*) appears as a female figure. In Julian’s *Showings*, ‘Christ Our Mother’ refers not only to Christ’s human nature, but extends to God’s preexistent Son as second person of the Trinity.

It is important to observe that Renaissance and Baroque *femmes savantes* represent a regression to the patristic stage, when they invoke women’s

31 Ibid. (NBA 5/3.366): “Nuptias ergo dominus futuras esse negavit in resurrectione, non feminas.”

32 Kari Elisabeth Børresen, “Challenging Augustine in Feminist Theology and Gender Studies,” in *The Oxford Guide to the Historical Reception of Augustine*, vol. 1, ed. Karla Pollmann and Willemien Otten (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 135–41.

33 Kari Elisabeth Børresen, “Julian of Norwich: A Model of Feminist Theology,” in Norderval and Ore, *From Patristics to Matristics*, 231–46; eadem, “Religious Feminism and Female God-language: from Hildegard of Bingen to Thérèse de Lisieux,” in Norderval and Ore, *From Patristics to Matristics*, 247–72; and eadem, “Matristics,” in *Encyclopedia of Ancient Christianity*, vol. 2: *F-O*, ed. Angelo Di Berardino (Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity Press, 2014), 730–35.

sexless *imago Dei* in order to claim women's right to education. Likewise, French salon-feminism affirms the Cartesian adage: *l'esprit n'a point de sexe*.

Fighting for women's socio-political rights, nineteenth-century Protestant feminists rediscover the matristic interaction between womanlike God and God-like women. Since all Christian institutions invoked God's creational gender hierarchy against equal rights for both sexes in society, these activists responded with theological argumentation. Consequently, they describe the divine with female metaphors in order to establish women's God-likeness as the main reason for sexual equality. Although she ignored medieval church mothers, the Norwegian Aasta Hansteen is a pioneer with *Kvinden skabt i Guds Billede (Woman Created in God's Image)* in 1878, soon followed by the North-American Elizabeth Cady Stanton and her collaborators in *The Woman's Bible* (1895, 1898). In fact, their inclusive *imago Dei* was first accepted in early twentieth-century Protestant theology, more resulting from Modernist critique of traditional Platonised anthropology than motivated by feminist concerns. Apparently unaware that this radically new inculturation is inconsistent with classical androcentric typology, holistic human God-likeness was also endorsed in Catholic theology after Vatican II. It is important to note that the patristic stage of sexless privilege is still upheld in Orthodox doctrine.

## 9 Updated *Imago Dei* and Outdated Typology

It is essential to recall that both Catholic and Orthodox doctrine preserve the early Christian typology of Adam-Christ (Rom 5:14), combined with the nuptial symbolism of Christ-Church (Eph 5:32). From the second to the fourth centuries, this typology was amplified in the sense of a salvational couple, with Christ as the new Adam and the church or Mary as new Eve. Such transposition of creational gender hierarchy to the order of redemption aggravates Eve's subordination as made after, from, and for Adam. The primeval pair consists of one autonomous and one dependent partner, but both are created human beings. In contrast, the salvational couple features a divinely supreme Lord and humanity as his submissive bride. It is important to observe that theomorphic maleness is here axiomatic, since this typology was constructed during the first doctrinal stage, *before* women received asexual God-likeness.

The resulting doctrinal incoherence between an updated holistic *imago Dei* and outdated androcentric typology is manifest in John Paul II's Apostolic Letter, *Mulieris dignitatem* (1988). Referring to women's 'feminine genius' and Mariotypic 'dignity', he invokes the traditional categories of virginity and motherhood as models of female existence. Euphemistically concealed by the

new concept ‘complementarity’, this apologetical discourse repeats the eighteenth-century norm of sexual polarity, invoked by Rousseau and Kant against feminist claims of women’s socio-political equality with men. The pontifical goal is to bolster traditional division of male and female roles in society and church, with special focus on women’s cultic incapability.<sup>34</sup>

## 10 Female *Impedimentum Sexus*

In fact, the recent Catholic affirmation of women’s holistic *imago Dei* is incompatible with the persistent ban on women’s ordination as priests and bishops. Since most traditional arguments presuppose women’s lack of God-likeness *qua* human females, the *magisterium* now faces the radically new task of explaining why God-like women cannot be Christ-like priests.<sup>35</sup> Therefore, John Paul II issued the Apostolic Letter, *Ordinatio sacerdotalis* in 1994, in order to impede the growing Catholic opposition to women’s *impedimentum sexus*:

Although the teaching that priestly ordination is to be reserved to men alone has been preserved by the constant and universal tradition of the Church and firmly taught by the magisterium in its more recent documents, at the present time in diverse places it is nonetheless considered still open to debate, or the Church’s judgment that women are not to be admitted to ordination is considered to have a merely disciplinary force. Wherefore, in order that all doubt shall be removed regarding a matter of great importance, which pertains to the Church’s divine constitution itself, in virtue of my ministry of confirming the brethren (cf. Luke 22:32) I declare that the Church has no authority whatsoever to confer priestly ordination on women and that this judgment is to be definitively held by all the Church’s faithful.<sup>36</sup>

34 Kari Elisabeth Børresen, “Image ajustée: typologie arrêtée: Analyse critique de Mulieris dignitatem,” in Børresen and Vogt, *Women’s Studies of the Christian and Islamic Traditions*, 343–57; and eadem, “Jean-Paul II et les femmes,” *Lumière et Vie* 52 (2003): 57–69.

35 Kari Elisabeth Børresen, “The Ordination of Women: to Nurture Tradition by Continuing Inculturation,” in Norderval and Ore, *From Patristics to Matristics*, 275–87; and eadem, “Impedimentum Sexus: The Cultic Impediment of Female Humanity,” in *Bodies, Borders, Believers: Ancient Texts and Present Conversations*, ed. Anne Hege Grung, Marianne B. Kartzow, and Anne Rebecca Solevåg (Eugene Or.: Wipf and Stock, 2015) (in press).

36 John Paul II, *Ordinatio sacerdotalis* (22 May 1994), 4 (AAS 86 [1994], 548): “Quamvis doctrina de ordinatione sacerdotali viris tantum reservanda constanti et universali Ecclesiae Traditione servetur atque Magisterio in recentioribus documentis firmiter doceatur,

When this papal veto did not silence the theological and pastoral discussion, Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger, then prefect of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, issued a *responsum* in 1995: “This teaching requires definitive assent (*assensum definitivum*), since founded on the written Word of God, and from the beginning constantly preserved and applied in the Tradition of the Church, it has been set forth infallibly by the ordinary and universal Magisterium (*ab ordinario et universali magistero infallibiliter proposita sit*).”<sup>37</sup> With this response to a fabricated doubt (*propositum dubium*), the future Benedict XVI insists that the Roman pontiff “has handed on this same teaching by a formal declaration, explicitly stating what is to be held, always, everywhere, and by all, as belonging to the deposit of faith (*depositum fidei*).”

These documents demonstrate the Vatican deadlock of upholding traditional conclusions despite superseded premises. Consequently, the widespread Catholic dissent was strengthened by this pontifical attempt to stop all theological critique. Since 1994 the number of solid studies on women’s cultic incapability has constantly increased. The focus is both on the canonical authority and the doctrinal content of John Paul II’s formal declaration against women’s ordination.<sup>38</sup>

Unfortunately, Pope Francis’ Apostolic Exhortation, *Evangelii gaudium* in 2013 repeats women’s exclusion from sacramental priesthood and even accentuates the argument of Christ’s incarnate maleness:

The reservation of priesthood to males, as a sign of Christ the Spouse who gives himself in the Eucharist, is not a question open to discussion, but it can prove especially divisive if sacramental power is too closely

---

temporibus tamen nostris diversis in partibus disputabilis habetur, aut etiam Ecclesiae sententiae non admittendi mulieres ad ordinationem illam vis mere disciplinariae tribuitur. Ut igitur omne dubium auferatur circa rem magni momenti, quae ad ipsam Ecclesiae divinam constitutionem pertinet, virtute ministerii Nostri confirmandi fratres (cf. Lc 22,32), declaramus Ecclesiam facultatem nullatenus habere ordinationem sacerdotalem mulieribus conferendi, hancque sententiam ab omnibus Ecclesiae fidelibus esse definitive tendendam.”

37 Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, “Responsum ad propositum dubium Concerning the Teaching Contained in *Ordinatio sacerdotalis*” (28 October 1995) (*AAS* 87 [1995], 1114).

38 Pertinent examples are: Lavinia Byrne, *Woman at the Altar: The Ordination of Women in the Roman Catholic Church* (New York: Continuum, 1995); Walter Gross, ed., *Frauenordination. Stand der Diskussion in der katholischen Kirche* (Munich: Wewel Verlag, 1996); and Sabine Demel, *Frauen und kirchliches Amt. Vom Ende eines Tabus in der katholischen Kirche* (Freiburg im Breisgau: Herder, 2004).



identified with power in general. It must be remembered that when we speak of sacramental power, 'we are in the realm of function, not that of dignity or holiness'. The ministerial priesthood is one means employed by Jesus for the service of his people, yet our great dignity derives from baptism, which is accessible to all. The configuration of the priest to the head—namely, as the principal source of grace—does not imply an exaltation which would set him above others. In the Church, functions 'do not favour the superiority of some vis-à-vis the others'. Indeed, a woman, Mary, is more important than the bishops.<sup>39</sup>

The citations are from John Paul II's 1988 Apostolic Exhortation *Christifideles laici* 51, but Francis does not cite *Ordinatio sacerdotalis*.

## 11 Ontological Androcentrism

In the Christian tradition, normative gender hierarchy is limited to the order of creation, whereas gender equivalence is reserved for the coming world. Nevertheless, the order of redemption is described according to asymmetrical gender models, so that fundamental christology, ecclesiology and Mariology are shaped from late antiquity in terms of androcentric inculturation. Seeking to safeguard the millenary male monopoly of priestly ordination, John Paul II introduced a so-called 'New Catholic feminism', mainly based on the gender-theology of Hans Urs von Balthasar. In a sophisticated critique of this convoluted strategy, Tina Beattie claims:

If feminists are to understand and challenge the misogyny that forms a dark undercurrent to the Catholic theological tradition, we must go beyond politics in order to ask why the Catholic hierarchy is so resistant to acknowledging the sacramentality of the female body to reveal Christ.<sup>40</sup>

In order to integrate episcopal authority in the obedient and faithful church, defined as Christ's receptive bride, von Balthasar constructs a bipolar principle of 'Marian' faith and 'Petrine' office.<sup>41</sup> Inspired by his close relation with the

39 Francis, *Evangelii gaudium* 104 (24 November 2013) (AAS 105 [2013], 1063).

40 Tina Beattie, *New Catholic Feminism: Theology and Theory* (London and New York: Routledge, 2006), 4.

41 Hans Urs von Balthasar, *The Office of Peter and the Structure of the Church*, trans. Andrée Emery, English ed. (San Francisco, Calif.: Ignatius Press, 1986). See the critical analysis

Catholic convert Adrienne von Speyr, who had mystical visions of Mary, von Balthasar invents a correlated interaction between the female mystic and the male priest. In a critical analysis of von Balthasar's 'theo-drama', Michelle A. Gonzalez points to what she calls von Balthasar's 'gendered Trinity':

The Father is the active, masculine principle, while the Son is passive and feminine. The Spirit receives both and simultaneously 'gives' as the eternal love between Father and Son. In regard to the Father, the Son is receptive, therefore feminine. The paradox of Sonship is found in the passivity of his activity. However, in regard to the world the Son is active."<sup>42</sup>

Since John Paul II, von Balthasar's gendered 'complementarity' of Christ-like male authority and Mario-typic female receptivity is invoked to prove that only male priests can act *in persona Christi*, by representing the Lord in his combined bridal and maternal church.

From a feminist perspective, the fundamental problem is that von Balthasar's bipolar sexology both presupposes and enforces the age-old paradigm of gender-specific, non-interchangeable male and female functions, established by God in creation. Anchoring his 'Marian' and 'Petrine' principle in the redemptive order, Christ and Mary emerge as ontological gender models, not only as symbolic figures of functional gender hierarchy. When Christ's incarnate maleness is enhanced by what I call 'phallogocentric christology', the patristic effort to include women as God-like already from creation, despite the axiomatic inferiority of female humanity, is completely reversed. Instead of promoting the modern collaboration of women and men in all fields of human activity, von Balthasar's ontological gender-play now serves to uphold cultic sex discrimination in the church, despite women's bio-socio-cultural equivalence in society. Unfortunately, Pope Francis also repeats this bipolar paradigm, when he promotes a divisive gender theology, called *teologia della donna*.

---

by Marinella Perroni, "A proposito del principio mariano-petrino: per una metodologia della elaborazione-comunicazione della fede che rispetti il dato biblico," in *La fede e la sua comunicazione. Il Vangelo, la Chiesa e la cultura*, ed. Piero Ciardella and Silvano Maggiani (Bologna: Dehoniane, 2006), 93–116; and eadem, "Principio Mariano-Principio Petri: Quaestio disputanda?," *Marianum* 72 (2010): 547–53.

42 Michelle A. Gonzalez, "Hans Urs von Balthasar and Contemporary Feminist Theology," *TS* 65 (2004): 585.

## 12 Conclusion

The strenuous Vatican effort to anchor women's cultic incapability in the order of salvation results in a growing Catholic critique of institutional gender *apartheid*.<sup>43</sup> Nevertheless, the aggravated ecumenical deadlock is clearly demonstrated by two contrasting events, which took place on 17 November 2014. On this day, the ordination of women bishops in the Church of England was formally promulgated by the general synod. At the same time, an international congress focused on Vatican sexology, entitled *Humanum* and dedicated to *La complementarità dell'uomo e della donna*, was opened by the Cardinal-Prefect of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith. This major initiative was organised together with the Pontifical Council for the Family, the Pontifical Council for Interreligious Dialogue and the Pontifical Council for the Promotion of Christian Unity.

In fact, the Vatican is now in the precarious situation of being left alone with the Orthodox churches in resisting women's cultic capability. I am afraid that this Vatican *dialogue des sourds* with Protestant Christianity will continue, given the Roman Curia's stubborn resistance to Catholic reform inspired by the Second Vatican Council.

## Bibliography

- Ambrosiaster. *Commentarius in epistulam ad Corinthios primam* (H.J. Vogels, ed., *Ambrosiastri qui dicitur commentarius in epistulas Paulinas*, CSEL, vol. 81/1–3. Vienna: Hölder-Pichler-Tempsky, 1966–1969).
- . *Liber quaestionum ueteris et noui testamenti* (A. Souter, ed., *Pseudo-Augustinus. Quaestiones ueteris et noui testamenti*, CSEL, vol. 50. Vienna: Hölder-Pichler-Tempsky, 1908).
- Apophthegmata patrum* (PG 65,71–440. English translation in Benedicta Ward, *The Sayings of the Desert Fathers: The Alphabetical Collection*, 2nd ed. Kalamazoo, Mich.: Cistercian Publications, 1984).

---

43 This theme is central in solid surveys of the current crisis: Sandra M. Schneiders, *Beyond Patching: Faith and Feminism in the Catholic Church* (Mahwah, N.J.: Paulist Press, 2004); Joseph Moingt, *Faire bouger l'Église catholique* (Paris: Desclée de Brouwer, 2012); Hans Küng, *Can We Save the Catholic Church?* (London: HarperCollins, 2013); and Maud Amandier and Alice Chablis, *Le Déni. Enquête sur l'Église et l'Égalité des Sexes* (Montrouge: Bayard, 2014).

- Augustine. *Opera (Opere di Sant'Agostino)*, NBA, 44 vols. Rome: Città Nuova Editrice, 1965–2007).
- . *De ciuitate Dei* (Henry Bettenson, *St Augustine: City of God*, Penguin Classics. London: Penguin Books, 1984).
- . *De Genesi ad litteram* (Edmund Hill, *Saint Augustine: On Genesis*, WSA, vol. 1/13. Hyde Park, N.Y.: New City Press, 2002).
- . *De Trinitate* (Edmund Hill, *Saint Augustine: The Trinity (De Trinitate)*, WSA, vol. 1/5. Hyde Park, N.Y.: New City Press, 1991).
- . *Expositio ad Galatas* (Eric Plumer, *Augustine's Commentary on Galatians: Introduction, Text, Translation, and Notes*, OECs. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003).
- Eusebius. *Historia ecclesiastica* (Eduard Schwartz, ed., and Gustave Bardy, trans., *Eusèbe de Césarée. Histoire ecclésiastique*, SC, vols 31, 41, 55, and 73. Paris: Éditions du Cerf, 1952–1960, with later revisions).
- Passio sanctarum Perpetuae et Felicitatis* (Herbert Musurillo, ed. and trans., *The Acts of the Christian Martyrs*, 106–31. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1972).
- Plato. Timaeus (R.G. Bury, trans. Plato, vol. 9: *Timaeus, Critias, Cleitophon, Menexenus, Epistles*, LCL. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1929).
- Amandier, Maud, and Alice Chablis. *Le Déni. Enquête sur l'Église et l'Égalité des Sexes*. Montrouge: Bayard, 2014.
- Balthasar, Hans Urs von. *The Office of Peter and the Structure of the Church*, trans. Andrée Emery, English ed. San Francisco, Calif.: Ignatius Press, 1986.
- Beattie, Tina. *New Catholic Feminism: Theology and Theory*. London and New York: Routledge, 2006.
- Børresen, Kari Elisabeth. "Imago Dei, privilège masculin? Interprétation augustinienne et pseudo-augustinienne de Gen. 1,27 et I Cor. 11,7." *Aug 25* (1985): 213–34.
- . "Image ajustée: typologie arrêtée: Analyse critique de Mulieris dignitatem." In Kari Elisabeth Børresen and Kari Vogt, *Women's Studies of the Christian and Islamic Traditions*, 343–57. Dordrecht: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 1993.
- . "Patristic 'Feminism': The Case of Augustine." *Augustinian Studies* 25 (1994): 137–52.
- , ed. *The Image of God: Gender Models in Judaeo-Christian Tradition*. Minneapolis, Minn.: Fortress Press, 1995.
- . "God's Image, Man's Image? Patristic Interpretation of Gen. 1,27 and I Cor. 11,7." In *The Image of God: Gender Models in Judaeo-Christian Tradition*, edited by Kari Elisabeth Børresen, 187–209. Minneapolis, Minn.: Fortress Press, 1995.
- . "God's Image, is Woman Excluded? Medieval Interpretation of Gen. 1,27 and I Cor. 11,7." In *The Image of God: Gender Models in Judaeo-Christian Tradition*, edited by Kari Elisabeth Børresen, 210–35. Minneapolis, Minn.: Fortress Press, 1995.

- . *Subordination et Équivalence. Nature et rôle de la femme d'après Augustin et Thomas d'Aquin*. Oslo: Universitetsforlaget, 1968. Updated English edition: *Subordination and Equivalence. The Nature and Role of Woman in Augustine and Thomas Aquinas. A Reprint of a Pioneering Classic*. Kampen: KokPharos, 1995.
- . "La Féminologie d'Augustin." In *From Patristics to Matristics: Selected Articles on Christian Gender Models* by Kari Elisabeth Børresen, edited by Øyvind Norderval and Katrine Lund Ore, 61–89. Rome: Herder Editrice, 2002.
- . "Julian of Norwich: A Model of Feminist Theology." In *From Patristics to Matristics: Selected Articles on Christian Gender Models* by Kari Elisabeth Børresen, edited by Øyvind Norderval and Katrine Lund Ore, 231–46. Rome: Herder Editrice, 2002.
- . "Religious Feminism and Female God-language: from Hildegard of Bingen to Thérèse de Lisieux." In *From Patristics to Matristics: Selected Articles on Christian Gender Models* by Kari Elisabeth Børresen, edited by Øyvind Norderval and Katrine Lund Ore, 247–72. Rome: Herder Editrice, 2002.
- . "The Ordination of Women: to Nurture Tradition by Continuing Inculturation." In *From Patristics to Matristics: Selected Articles on Christian Gender Models* by Kari Elisabeth Børresen, edited by Øyvind Norderval and Katrine Lund Ore, 275–87. Rome: Herder Editrice, 2002.
- . "Jean-Paul II et les femmes." *Lumière et Vie* 52 (2003): 57–69.
- , ed. *Christian and Islamic Gender Models in Formative Traditions*, Studi e Testi TardoAntichi, vol. 2. Rome: Herder Editrice, 2004.
- . "Challenging Augustine in Feminist Theology and Gender Studies." In *The Oxford Guide to the Historical Reception of Augustine*, vol. 1, edited by Karla Pollmann and Willemien Otten, 135–41. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013.
- . "Matristics," in *Encyclopedia of Ancient Christianity*, vol. 2: F–O, ed. Angelo Di Berardino, 730–35. Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity Press, 2014.
- . "Impedimentum Sexus: The Cultic Impediment of Female Humanity." In *Bodies, Borders, Believers: Ancient Texts and Present Conversations*, edited by Anne Hege Grung, Marianne B. Kartzow, and Anne Rebecca Solevåg (Eugene Or.: Wipf and Stock, 2015) (in press).
- Byrne, Lavinia. *Woman at the Altar: The Ordination of Women in the Roman Catholic Church*. New York: Continuum, 1995.
- Clark, Elizabeth A. *Ascetic Piety and Women's Faith: Essays on Late Ancient Christianity*, Studies in Women and Religion, vol. 20. Lewiston, N.Y.: Edward Mellen Press, 1986.
- Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith. "Responsum ad propositum dubium Concerning the Teaching Contained in *Ordinatio sacerdotalis*." *AAS* 87 (1995): 1114.
- Demel, Sabine. *Frauen und kirchliches Amt. Vom Ende eines Tabus in der katholischen Kirche*. Freiburg im Breisgau: Herder, 2004.

- Elm, Susanna. *Virgins of God: The Making of Asceticism in Late Antiquity*, OCM. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994.
- Fatum, Lone. "Image of God and Glory of Man: Women in the Pauline Congregations." In *The Image of God: Gender Models in Judaeo-Christian Tradition*, edited by Kari Elisabeth Børresen, 50–133. Minneapolis, Minn.: Fortress Press, 1995.
- Francis. *Evangelii gaudium* (24 November 2013). *AAS* 105 (2013), 1019–1137.
- Gasparro, Giulia Sfameni. "Image of God and Sexual Differentiation in the Tradition of Enkrateia." In *The Image of God: Gender Models in Judaeo-Christian Tradition*, edited by Kari Elisabeth Børresen, 134–69. Minneapolis, Minn.: Fortress Press, 1995.
- Gonzalez, Michelle A. "Hans Urs von Balthasar and Contemporary Feminist Theology." *TS* 65 (2004): 566–95.
- Gössmann, Elisabeth. *Metaphysik und Heilsgeschichte. Eine theologische Untersuchung der Summa Halensis*. Munich: M. Hueber, 1964.
- Gross, Walter, ed. *Frauenordination. Stand der Diskussion in der katholischen Kirche*. Munich:ewel Verlag, 1996.
- Guy, Jean-Claude Guy, ed. *Recherches sur la tradition grecque des Apophthegmata patrum*, Subsidia Hagiographica, vol. 36. Brussels: Société des Bollandistes, 1962.
- Heinzelmann, Gertrud. *Wir schweigen nicht länger. Frauen äusseren sich zum II. Vatikanischen Konzil*. Zürich: Interfeminas Verlag, 1964.
- . *Die geheiligte Diskriminierungen*. Bonstetten: Interfeminas Verlag, 1986.
- Hunter, David G. "The Paradise of Patriarchy: Ambrosiaster on Woman as (not) God's Image." *JTS* n.s. 43 (1992): 447–69.
- John Paul II. *Ordinatio sacerdotalis* (22 May 1994). *AAS* 86 (1994): 544–48.
- Küng, Hans. *Can We Save the Catholic Church?* London: HarperCollins, 2013.
- Lutheran-Roman Catholic Commission on Unity. *The Apostolicity of the Church. Study Document of the Lutheran-Roman Catholic Commission on Unity*. Minneapolis, Minn.: Lutheran University Press, 2006.
- Macy, Gary. "The Ordination of Women in the Early Middle Ages." *TS* 61 (2000): 481–597.
- . *The Hidden History of Women's Ordination: Female Clergy in the Medieval West*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008.
- Martin, John Hilary. "The Ordination of Women and the Theologians in the Middle Ages." In *A History of Women and Ordination*, vol. 1: *The Ordination of Women in a Medieval Context*, edited by Bernard Cooke and Gary Macy, 31–175. Lanham, Md and London: Scarecrow Press, 2002.
- Minnis, Alastair J. "De impedimento sexus: Women's Bodies and Medieval Impediments to Female Ordination." In *Medieval Theology and the Natural Body*, edited by Peter Biller and Alastair J. Minnis, 109–39. York: York Medieval Press, 1997.
- Moingt, Joseph. *Faire bouger l'Église catholique*. Paris: Desclée de Brouwer, 2012.

- Perroni, Marinella. "A proposito del principio mariano-petrino: per una metodologia della elaborazione-comunicazione della fede che rispetti il dato biblico." In *La fede e la sua comunicazione. Il Vangelo, la Chiesa e la cultura*, edited by Piero Ciardella and Silvano Maggiani, 93–116. Bologna: Dehoniane, 2006.
- . "Principio Mariano-Principio Petrino: Quaestio disputanda?" *Marianum* 72 (2010): 547–53.
- Pollmann, Karla. "'Non est masculus et femina'. Gal 3,28 in Kommentarauslegungen des 4./5. und des 20. Jahrhunderts: Ein nicht eingelöstes Vermächtnis?" In *Spiritus et Littera. Beiträge zur Augustinus-Forschung*, edited by Guntram Förster, Andreas E.J. Grote, and Christof Müller, Festschrift zum 80. Geburtstag von Cornelius Petrus Mayer OSA, 681–95. Würzburg: Echter Verlag, 2009.
- Raming, Ida. *A History of Women and Ordination*, vol. 2: *The Priestly Office of Women—God's Gift to a Renewed Church*, edited and translated by Bernard Cooke and Gary Macy, 2nd ed. Lanham, Md: Scarecrow Press, 2004.
- Reidick, Gertrude. *Die hierarchische Struktur der Ehe*, Münchener theologische Studien, 111, Kanonische Abteilung, Bd 3. Munich: EOS Verlag, 1953.
- Schneiders, Sandra M. *Beyond Patching: Faith and Feminism in the Catholic Church*. Mahwah, N.J.: Paulist Press, 2004.
- Vogt, Kari. "The Desert Mothers: Female Ascetism in Egypt from the 4th to the 6th Century." In Kari Elisabeth Børresen and Kari Vogt, *Women's Studies of the Christian and Islamic Traditions*, 103–216. Dordrecht: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 1993.
- . "'Becoming Male': A Gnostic and Early Christian Metaphor." In *The Image of God: Gender Models in Judaeo-Christian Tradition*, edited by Kari Elisabeth Børresen, 170–86. Minneapolis, Minn.: Fortress Press, 1995.





# Index of Primary Sources

- acta conciliorum* 368, 375, 377, 380, 390–1  
*Acta Iohanni* 65  
*Acta Petri* 65, 396  
*Acta Sylvestri* 395–8, 401  
*Acta Thom.* 65  
Acts of the apostles 30–8, 211, 213n12, 218, 281n81  
Alcinous  
  *Didaskalikos* 103n13  
Ambrose  
  *De fide* 167n3, 170  
  *De officiis* 8, 167, 169–72, 174–84  
  *De virginibus* 336  
  *Epistulae* 169–83, 278  
  *Exp. ev. sec. Lucam* 229, 231–40, 243  
  *Exp. psalmi* 242  
  *Hymns* 336  
Ambrosiaster  
  *Ad Cor. primam* 482  
  *Lib. quaest. uet. et nou. test.* 482  
Ammianus Marcellinus 208n2  
Antony the Great  
  *Epistulae* 86  
Apocalypse *see* Revelation  
*Apophthegmata patrum* 85–6, 484–5  
Aristides of Athens  
  *Apologia* 48–62  
Aristotle  
  *Ars rhetorica* 255n21  
Artemidoros  
  *Oneirocritica* 56, 322, 333  
Athanasius  
  *Vita Antonii* 86–8  
Augustine  
  *Ad Cresconium* 271  
  *Confessiones* 256, 263, 324  
  *Contra Adimantum* 232n30  
  *Contra ep. fund. Manichaeorum* 232n30  
  *Contra Fortunatum* 232n30  
  *Contra litt. Pet. Don. Cirt. ep.* 271  
  *De baptisate* 279n66  
  *De civitate Dei* 262, 338, 490  
  *De diversis quaestionibus* 262  
  *De doctrina christiana* 204, 250, 255–63  
  *De Genesi ad litteram* 486–8  
  *De haeresibus* 271n23  
  *De immortalitate* 336  
  *De sermone Domini in monte* 8, 225–44  
  *De spiritu et littera* 255  
  *De trinitate* 488–9  
  *Enn. in psalmos* 254–5, 336  
  *Epistulae* 225n1, 250, 253, 275–6, 279n66  
  *Exp. Gal.* 489–90  
  *Retractationes* 225n3, 253  
  *Sermones* 225n1–2, 263, 484  
*Baarlam and Josaphat* 48–62  
Babai the Great  
  *De unione* 446  
Basil of Caesarea  
  *Adversus Eunomium* 105n17  
  *Asceticon magnum* 92–6  
  *De spiritu sancto* 96–8, 104, 108  
  *Epistulae* 87, 89, 90–1, 93n20, 94, 95, 97  
  *Hom. 19* 344  
  *Philokalia* 89  
  *Pros tous neous* 204  
*b. Yebamot* 32  
  
*canones conciliorum* 274, 279–80, 357–8, 375, 377, 380, 439  
Candidus  
  *Fragmenta* 299  
Cassian, John  
  *Collationes* 86  
Cassius Dio  
  *Historia Romana* 30  
*Chronicon paschale* 365, 368–73, 375, 381  
Cicero  
  *De officiis* 167  
1 Clement 61  
*Codex Iuris Canonici* 479  
*Codex Parisinus Graecus 1447* 298  
*Codex Theodosianus* 269  
Colossians 110, 483  
Constantine Porphyrogenetos  
  *De ceremoniis* 306  
*Constitutions of Boniface* 330  
1&2 Corinthians 35, 58, 59, 111, 113, 122, 124, 201, 230–1, 255, 260, 480–2, 486–8

- Cyprian  
*Epistulae* 272
- Cyril of Alexandria  
*De recta fide* 414  
*Epistulae* 442–3
- Cyril of Scythopolis  
*Vita Sabae* 312
- Daniel 219, 324, 328
- Decreti 482
- Decretum Gelasianum* 397
- De gestis in Perside* 391–4, 396, 401
- De rebaptismate* 272n27
- Deuteronomy 39
- Dialexis* 398–401
- Didascalia apostolorum* 87
- Doctrina Addai* 398
- Ecclesiastes 130, 135, 323–4
- Ephesians 210n5, 238, 480, 483–5, 490, 492
- Epiphanius  
*Panarion* 118–21, 125, 127  
*Epistula apostolorum* 123
- Esther 29
- Eusebius  
*Historia ecclesiastica* 48, 129, 272n28,  
364, 367, 483–4
- Eustathius  
*Ep. de duabus naturis* 428
- Evagrius Scholasticus  
*Historia ecclesiastica* 304, 306–7, 364,  
368
- Exodus 135, 214n16
- Ezekiel 179, 201
- Filastrius of Brescia  
*Diuersarum hereseon lib.* 271n23
- Francis, pope  
*Euangelii gaudium* 494–5
- Galatians 35–7, 130–1, 135, 480–1, 483, 485–9
- Genesis 56, 105, 111, 120, 135, 209n3, 210n5,  
213, 214n17, 215n19–20, 23, 324, 480–3,  
485–8, 490
- Gennadius  
*De uiris illustribus* 275
- George Kedrenos  
*Synopsis historion* 311, 365, 379–80
- George Synkellos  
*Chronicon* 371
- George the Monk  
*Chronicon* 365, 375–8, 380–1  
*Gesta concilii Aquileiensis* 172n26, 177
- Gospel of Thomas 483
- Gratian  
*Decretum* 330
- Gregory of Nazianzus  
*Or.* 2 158  
*Or.* 30 423  
*Or.* 43 91
- Gregory of Nyssa  
*Antirrheticus adv. Apollinarium* 108–9  
*Contra Eunomium* 423  
*De beatitudinibus or.* 101, 110–11, 229–40  
*De perfectione christiana* 110  
*De tridui spatio* 423  
*De vita Moysis* 110  
*Dial. de anima et resurrectione* 88, 113  
*Encom. in s. Stephanum protomartyrem* 109  
*Encom. in xl martyres* 345  
*In cantica canticorum or.* 110n34  
*Oratio catechetica* 110, 112, 113  
*Vita s. Macrinae* 88
- Gregory of Tours  
*Gloria confessorum* 324n16
- Gregory the Great  
*Dialogi* 9, 322–9, 337–8
- Hebrews 442
- Herodotus  
*Historiae* 56
- Hilary of Poitiers  
*Tract. super psalmos* 242
- Hildegard of Bingen  
*Scivias* 491
- Historia monachorum* 86
- Hooker, Richard  
*Laws of Ecclesiastical Polity* 441–3
- Ignatius of Antioch 38
- Innocent I  
*Epistulae* 270, 273–84
- Isaiah 61, 135, 200, 226–7, 229, 240–2
- Jacob of Sarugh  
*Homiliae*

- Jeremiah 192, 201, 203
- Jerome  
*Adv. Iovinianem* 212  
*Apol. adv. libros Rufini* 188, 193–5  
*Chronicon* 271n23  
*Comm. in Daniele* 219  
*Comm. in Ecclesiasten* 191n14, 192, 200  
*Comm. in Esaiam* 191–2, 196, 198–200  
*Comm. in Hieremiam* 188n6, 191–2, 198n41, 199, 201–3  
*Comm. in Hiezechielem* 192, 198–9, 201–2  
*De viris illustribus* 193n25, 204  
*Dial. adv. Pelagianos* 188, 192–3  
*Epistulae* 140n3, 188–9, 191, 193, 196–7, 200, 204, 212  
*Vita Hilarionis* 210n4, 211  
*Vita Malchi* 8, 187n2, 208–23  
*Vita Pauli* 87n6, 210n4
- Job 130, 135, 195
- John, Gospel of 59, 61, 109, 132, 233–4, 261  
 1&2 John 193n25, 268
- John Chrysostom  
*Ad eos qui scandalizatur* 151–4  
*Ad Stagirium* 149, 155n76  
*De s. Phoca* 145n24  
*De statuis hom.* 155n76  
*In Acta apost. hom.* 155  
*In illud: Messis quidem multa* 145n24  
*In illud: Ne timueritis hom.* 154n25  
*In Iohannem hom.* 156n86  
*In Matthaem hom.* 155–7  
*In Titum hom.* 145n25  
*Laus Diodori* 145n24  
*Quales ducendae sint uxores* 145n24  
*Quod nemo laeditur* 151, 153–5
- John Lydus  
*De magistratibus populi Romani* 309
- John Malalas  
*Chronographia* 299n33, 303–5, 308, 365–73, 375
- John of Antioch  
*Historia chronica* 302, 305
- John of Damascus  
*Encom. in s. Iohannem Chrysostomum* 141n5
- John Paul II  
*Christifideles laici* 495
- Mulieris dignitatem* 492  
*Ordinatio sacerdotalis* 493, 495
- Josephus  
*Antiquitates Judaicae* 30  
*Contra Apionem* 29, 32  
*De bello Judaico* 29, 30
- Joshua 130, 135
- Judas Kyriakos  
*Inventio crucis* 394–6
- Judges 130, 135
- Judith 31
- Julian of Norwich  
*Showings* 491
- Justinian  
*Codex* 300, 368, 370–1, 375  
*Edictum contra Originem* 126–7  
*Novellae* 298n26, 399
- Justin Martyr 60  
*Apologia* 65  
*De resurrectione* 123  
*Dialogus cum Tryphone* 65–6
- Juvenal  
*Saturae* 31
- Lactantius  
*De ira Dei* 336
- Leo I, pope  
*Tome* 427, 443, 446
- Leo XIII, pope  
*Aeterni Patris* 457  
*Providentissimus Deus* 457
- Leviticus 39, 237, 324–5
- Liber pontificalis* 269, 275
- Luke 54, 58, 182, 209, 211–12, 226, 267, 412, 491, 493
- 2&4 Maccabees 29
- Marcellinus Comes  
*Chronicon* 301n39, 309, 311
- Mark 54, 59, 210n5, 215–16, 267
- Matthew 31, 39–44, 54, 91, 111, 133, 135, 211, 215–16, 226–7, 231, 233–4, 240, 267, 328, 491
- Maximus Confessor  
*Disputatio cum Pyrrho* 390–1, 401  
*Epistulae* 390
- Methodius of Olympus  
*De resurrectione* 121, 123

- m. Gittin* 32
- Michael Psellos  
*Chronographia* 379  
*Historia syntomos* 365, 379–80
- Nestorius  
*Liber Heraclidis* 443
- Nikephoros  
*Breviarum* 374
- Numbers 191, 214n16
- Optatus  
*De schismate* 271n23
- Oracle of Baalbek* 311
- Ordo of the Church, Coptic* 347–56
- Origen  
*Comm. in ep. ad Romanos*  
*Comm. in Iohannem* 129, 132  
*Comm. in Matthaeum* 234  
*Contra Celsum* 66, 69–70, 75n52, 106n22,  
107n26, 136  
*De principiis* 106–7, 118, 121–4, 130–3  
*Excerpta in psalmos* 121  
*Hexapla* 131  
*Hom. Ieremiam* 134  
*In Genesim hom.* 134
- Palladius  
*Dial. de vita s. Ioh. Chrys.* 140n3, 283  
*Historia Lausiaca* 86
- Papyri  
*ACM* 76n56–7  
*PGM* 67n21, 69n26, 70, 71n34, 71n37,  
72–3, 75, 77  
*P. Prag.* 71n38  
*SM* 67n21, 68–72, 77
- Parastaseis syntomoi chronikai* 301
- Passio Anastasiae* 388
- Passio ss. Perpetuae et Felicitatis* 484
- Patria Constantinopoleos* 309
- Paul Evergetis  
*Synagoge* 338
- 1&2 Peter 212, 411–13
- Philip of Side  
*Historia ecclesiastica* 391–2
- Philippians 35, 111, 432, 446
- Philo  
*De fuga et inventione* 105n19
- De legatione ad Gaium* 30, 32
- De opificio mundi* 105
- De somniis* 31
- De specialibus legibus* 31, 32
- De virtutibus* 32
- Philoxenus of Mabbug  
*Letter to the monks of Senoun* 427
- Pius X  
*Lamentabili sane exitu* 458  
*Pascendi dominici gregis* 458–9, 466  
*Sacrorum antistitum* 459
- Plato  
*Cratylus* 102  
*Gorgias* 255  
*Phaedo* 100, 113  
*Phaedrus* 102, 255  
*Respublica* 101–2, 103n10–12, 107, 109, 112,  
334  
*Theaetetus* 100, 103, 105n19  
*Timaeus* 478
- Plotinus  
*Enneades* 101–4, 260
- Plutarch  
 *Lives* 29
- Porphyry  
*De antro nympharum* 101–2
- Possidius  
*Indiculum* 253  
*Vita Augustini* 250, 253
- Priscian  
*Panegyricus Anastasii* 311, 314
- Priscillian  
*Tractatus* 273n31
- Proclus of Constantinople  
*Tomus ad Armenios* 445
- Proverbs 212, 218, 263
- Psalms 75, 135, 191n13, 192n25, 226n9, 227,  
237–8, 241–2, 250, 254, 336
- Ps-Athanasius  
*Contra Apollinarium* 414
- Ps-Clement 422  
*Ep. ad virgines* 73n44
- Ps-Daniel  
*Oneirocriticon* 9, 323, 329–33, 337–9
- Ps-Hippolytus 414  
*Paschal homily* 413
- Ps-Jerome  
*Indiculus de haeresibus* 271n23

- Ps-Joshua the Stylite  
*Chronicon* 305n54
- Ps-Marius Mercator  
*App. ad contradict. xii anath.*  
*Nest.* 278n62
- Ps-Martyrius  
*Oratio funebris* 141n4
- Ps-Symeon  
*Chronographia* 365, 374n22, 378–80
- Ps-Zachariah of Mytilene  
*Historia ecclesiastica* 307, 310–11
- Regula magistrī* 335
- Revelation 59, 135
- Romans 35, 37, 61, 260, 262n44, 483, 492
- Rufinus of Aquileia  
*Historia ecclesiastica* 375–6  
*Regula Basilii* 92
- 1&2 Samuel 181
- Sermo de anima et corpore* 413
- Severus of Antioch  
*Homiliae* 312, 345, 356, 427
- Severus of Minorca  
*Epistula* 397n32
- Sirach 241–2, 323–5
- Socrates  
*Historia ecclesiastica* 364, 367, 375–6
- Somniale Danielis* 323, 330
- Sozomen  
*Historia ecclesiastica* 364, 367, 375
- Sulpicius Severus  
*Dialogi* 85  
*Vita sancti Martini* 85
- Symeon Logothete  
*Chronicon* 365, 378, 380
- Symmachus  
*Relatio* 168
- Synodicon uetus* 365
- Tacitus  
*Historiae* 31
- Tatian 60
- Tertullian  
*Aduersus Marcionem* 123  
*Apologeticum* 66  
*De anima* 335  
*De resurrectione carnis* 122n19, 123  
*The Book of the Confessions of the Fathers* 343
- Theodore Lector  
*Historia ecclesiastica* 302, 306, 311, 367, 371, 373, 375
- Theodoret of Cyrrihus  
*Graecarum affectionum curatio* 153  
*Historia ecclesiastica* 283, 364, 367, 375–6
- Theophanes Confessor  
*Chronographia* 301n39, 365, 371–5, 377–80
- 1&2 Thessalonians 59
- 1&2 Timothy 233
- Titus 268, 277
- t. Qiddushin* 32
- Traditio apostolica* 66
- Victor of Tunnuna  
*Chronicon* 306
- Virgil  
*Aeneid* 199, 202–3, 216–18, 222  
*Eclogues* 203  
*Georgics* 200
- Vita Danielis Stylites* 301n39, 306n58
- Vita Gregentii* 396n31, 400–1
- Vita Heliae* 388
- Vita of Basil the Younger* 400
- Vita Porphyrii* 2n3
- y. Hagigah* 32
- y. Niddah* 32
- y. Yebamot* 32
- Zechariah 59
- Zeno  
*Henotikon* 304, 310, 312
- Zonaras  
*Epitome historion* 311, 365, 381

# General Index

- Abraham 209  
Acacius, b. of Beroea 283–4  
Acacius, b. of Constantinople 302–3  
Achor 31  
Adam 210, 212–13, 222, 481–2, 486–7, 492  
Adonis 49  
*Adversus Iudaeos* literature 389, 393–4,  
396–7, 401  
Aelius Aristides 48  
Aeneas 216–18, 222  
Agathias 364  
Alcinous 103  
Alexander, b. of Alexandria 376  
Alexander, b. of Antioch 283–4, 413  
Alexander the Great 29  
Alexandria 118, 128–9, 131, 134, 251, 283,  
370n13, 400  
Alexandrian school/exegesis 7, 9, 143n14,  
409, 418, 420–1, 432, 438, 446  
almsgiving 31, 37, 156, 169, 174, 210–11, 250,  
254–5, 326  
poor-roll/*matricula* 250–1  
Altar of Victory 8, 168  
alterity *See* identity, false/non-/negative;  
heretics  
Alypius, b. of Thagaste 252, 275  
Ambrose, b. of Milan 8, 167–84, 230–40,  
242–3, 252, 278, 334–6, 413, 482  
Ambrosiaster 413, 482  
Amoun 128, 252  
Amphilochios of Ikonion 93  
amulets 7, 67–72, 74, 76–7  
Ananias 211  
Anastasius, bibliothecarius 374n22  
Anastasius, emperor 293–4, 306–13  
Anastasius of Sinai 334  
angels 62, 75–6, 90, 96–7, 201, 328, 338, 350,  
372  
Annisa 91–2, 95  
Anomoians 121, 282  
Anthemius, emperor 299  
Anthemius, praetorian prefect 309  
anthropology, human 144, 147, 249–50,  
256–63, 478, 480–93  
Antioch 34, 36–7, 145, 153, 158, 251, 282–3,  
304–5, 343–4  
Antiochene  
school/exegesis 9, 143n14, 409, 415, 418,  
420–1, 432, 438, 446–7  
schism 282–4  
Antoninus, b. of Fussala 250–1, 259  
Antoninus Pius, emperor 48  
Antony the Great 85–8, 128  
Anysius, b. of Thessaloniki 278–80  
Aphrodisias 32  
Aphrodite 49  
Aphroditian 391–4  
apocryphal literature 386–7, 394–5  
Apollinarians/ism 414, 416, 432  
Apollinarius of Laodicea 108–9, 376, 415,  
420, 438, 446  
Apollo 49  
apostles 36–7, 65, 128, 151n47, 199–200, 231,  
241–2, 398, 454, 463  
Aquinas *See* Thomas Aquinas  
Arab conquest 2, 9, 343  
Arcadia, wife of Zeno 299n32  
Ares 49  
Ariadne, empress 9, 293–314  
Aristides of Athens 6, 48–9, 54  
Aristotle 147  
Arius/Arianism 121, 141, 172–5, 177–8, 197,  
282, 297, 366–7, 376, 378–9, 398, 413–15,  
420, 432  
Armatus, nephew of Basiliscus 301–3  
Artemidoros 56, 329  
Artemis 49, 56  
asceticism 7, 73, 86–91, 94–6, 117, 119, 125,  
128, 143, 149, 169, 188–9, 204, 210, 213,  
252, 269, 273, 325, 335, 484  
*See also* monasticism  
Asklepios 49  
Aspar 296–7  
Assyrian conquest 29  
Athanasius, b. of Alexandria 88, 334, 413,  
415, 421–2, 438  
Athenagoras 134  
Athenian philosophical school 157



- Athens 87, 89, 91  
 Attis 49  
 audience 6  
 Augustine, b. of Hippo 8, 85, 117, 135, 190,  
 225–44, 248–64, 271, 275, 324, 330n40,  
 336, 482, 486–91  
 Aurelius, b. of Carthage 275, 277  
 Auxentius 173, 178
- Babai the Great 446  
 Babylon 200  
 Babylonian  
 conquest 29  
 exile 29  
 Bacht, Heinrich 410  
 Balthasar, Hans Urs von 495–6  
 baptism 26, 34, 42–3, 60, 91, 94, 192, 270,  
 272–3, 281, 393, 395, 396n29, 399, 401,  
 445, 472, 479, 483, 495  
 barbarians 3, 48–9, 51, 61–2, 85, 177–8  
 Barlaam romance 48–9  
 Barnabas 36  
 Basil I, emperor 401  
 Basil of Caesarea 7, 86–99, 101, 108, 344, 346,  
 351, 359  
 Basilides 131  
 Basiliscus, emperor 293, 296, 301, 305  
 Basiliscus/Leo, *caesar* 293, 301–2  
 Belisarius 390  
 Benedict of Nursia 85, 252, 327  
 Benedict XVI, pope 494  
 Beroea 283  
 Bethlehem 208n1, 221, 252, 277  
 bible  
 Vetus Latina 227n10, 240  
 Vulgate 227n10, 240  
 Septuagint 105, 195, 240  
 biblical criticism 457–8, 460, 465–72  
 bishop/s 6, 65, 86, 93, 95, 119, 128–9, 170,  
 172–3, 175, 176n52, 178–83, 188–9, 191,  
 248–9, 250–6, 262, 268–9, 273–85, 310,  
 312, 326–7, 364, 366, 371–4, 376–7, 381,  
 388, 392–3, 458, 480, 493, 495, 497  
 Blandina, martyr 483  
 Boniface, b. of Rome 283  
 Bonosians 274, 278–82, 284–5  
 Bonosus, b. of Niš 278–9
- Buddhism 392, 478  
 Bulgars 373  
 Buonaiuti, Ernesto 460
- Caelestius 275–7  
 Caesarea 88, 91–3, 118, 136–7  
 Cairo 449  
 Calandion, b. of Antioch 304  
 Calligonus 173  
 Callinicum 8, 183  
 canons 93, 268, 330n38  
 conciliar/synodical 93  
 patristic 93, 270  
 Cappadocia 302, 344  
 Carthage 218, 252, 390–1  
 Cassian, John 86, 252  
 Cassiacum 190  
 Cataphrygians 269  
 catechesis 188, 225  
 Catholic/catholic *see* Christianity  
 Catholic Modernism 10, 456–60, 471–2  
 Cellia 128  
 Celsus 69–70, 107  
 Chalcedon 301–2  
 Chalcis 208, 210  
 Chaldaeans 49  
 Chambésy 431, 439  
 chastity *see* virginity  
 Cherris 304–5  
 China 426  
 Chosroes I 392  
 Chosroes II 392  
 Christ *see* christology  
 Christian/s 6, 9, 25, 27, 33, 42–4, 48, 50–1,  
 61–2, 65, 70, 75–6, 87, 93–4, 129, 171–2,  
 180–81, 188–90, 193, 195, 199, 205, 208,  
 220, 311, 322, 364, 366–7, 373, 376,  
 386–7, 389, 391–5, 399, 409, 464–5, 473  
 clergy *See* priests  
 dispensation 199n47, 205  
 fanatics 179  
 Judaism 27, 34, 36–8, 42  
 literature 401–2  
 storytelling 387  
 Christianisation 188–90, 205, 399  
 Christianity 2, 25, 27–8, 33–5, 37, 40–1, 54,  
 105, 119, 171–2, 180, 190–1, 252–3, 267–8,

- Christianity (cont.)  
 270, 322, 327, 330, 333, 366–8, 372, 376,  
 381, 392, 394, 454, 456, 460–1, 464, 468,  
 470, 472, 478–9  
 African 225, 230, 271, 275–7  
 Alexandrian 125  
 anti-Chalcedonian *See non-*  
*Chalcedonian below*  
 Armenian Apostolic 426, 429–30  
 Assyrian Church of the East 426, 436,  
 441, 443–6, 449–50  
 Byzantine 338  
 Catholic/catholic 141–2, 233, 239, 281,  
 426–30, 432–5, 445, 447, 454–73,  
 479–80, 492–7  
 Chalcedonian 306, 310, 312, 400, 426–8,  
 432, 436–8, 448–9  
 Coptic Orthodox 426, 429–32, 442, 448–9  
 Eastern Orthodox 426  
 Egyptian 342  
 Eritrean Orthodox 426  
 Ethiopian Orthodox 426  
 Gallic 269–73, 324, 330n38  
 gnostic *see* gnosticism  
 Illyrian 278–82  
 Italian 167, 280, 284, 324  
 Malankara Orthodox Syrian 426, 430,  
 434  
 miaphysite 369n10, 426, 450  
 monophysite 310, 414, 426, 450  
 neo-Chalcedonian 439  
 neo-Nicene 141, 158  
 Nicene 167n3, 174, 282  
 non-Chalcedonian 301, 310, 312, 342–4,  
 358, 445  
 Orthodox 76, 97, 378, 428, 430, 433,  
 436–40, 479, 486, 492, 497  
 Protestant 141–2, 427, 430, 442, 449, 454,  
 461, 468, 471–2, 479–80, 492, 497  
 Roman *See* Roman church  
 Spanish 273–5  
 Syrian Orthodox 426, 428–30  
 christology 6, 9–10, 26, 41, 55, 68, 70–2, 75,  
 96, 109, 120, 172n26, 231, 235, 282, 284,  
 367, 373, 376, 390, 396, 400, 409–23,  
 426–49, 491–2, 495  
 chronicles, Byzantine 9, 365–82  
 Cicero 8, 176, 178, 181, 183  
 circumcision 30–1, 35–7, 42–3, 129, 237–9,  
 396  
 citizenship 29  
 Clement of Alexandria 128, 485–6  
 conflict 6, 8, 36, 41, 128, 167, 173–4, 178, 181,  
 190, 192, 267–8, 285, 301–2, 307–10, 371,  
 381, 390, 395, 427  
 Constantine, emperor 187, 205, 248, 376,  
 395–6, 398  
 Constantine IV, emperor 373  
 Constantine of Tios 381  
 Constantinople 88, 91, 252, 283, 293, 296–7,  
 299, 301, 303–4, 309, 312, 314, 326, 343,  
 366, 370, 373, 377, 400–1, 446  
 Baths of Constantine 309  
 Blachernai church 310  
 Church of Elias 309  
 Church of John the Baptist 310  
 Church of St Michael the Archangel 309  
 Church of St Euphemia in  
 Chalcedon 381  
 Church of St Euphemia in Petra 309  
 Church of the Forty Martyrs 309  
 Church of the Holy Apostles 302, 305,  
 311  
 Forum of Constantine 310  
 Hebdomon 310  
 hippodrome 302, 305–6, 310  
 Kochlias 302–3  
 Monastery of Theotokos Evergetis 337  
 Nea 309  
 palace 296, 301–2, 306, 310, 400  
 Shrine of the Virgin at Blachernai 298  
 Sykai 305  
 Trullo palace 364  
 Virgin Church of Chalkoprateia 298  
 conversion 31–3, 36–7, 42–4, 392, 394–5,  
 399, 401  
 Copernicus 455, 478  
 Corinth 37  
 Cornelius, b. of Rome 271  
 councils 36–7, 190, 364–82  
 Ancyra (314 CE) 330n38  
 Chalcedon (451 CE) 10, 310, 312, 364,  
 367–9, 373, 377–8, 381, 410, 416, 426–7,  
 431, 443, 445–9  
 Constantinople (381 CE) 364, 366–7, 376,  
 380, 431, 445

- Constantinople (553 CE) 120n9, 364, 367–71, 373, 375, 377, 380, 438–9
- Constantinople (680–1 CE) 364, 377, 446
- Ephesus (431 CE) 364, 366–8, 377, 379, 415, 418, 422, 431, 438
- Ephesus (449 CE) 364, 367–9, 372, 375, 377–8
- in Trullo (691/2 CE) 364, 374–5, 377, 379
- Nicaea (325 CE) 190, 274, 280–2, 364, 366–7, 369, 372, 375–8, 380, 431
- Nicaea (787 CE) 364, 374–5, 377–8, 380, 438
- Vatican II (1962–5) 479, 491–2, 497
- Craton 397
- creedal formulae/creeds 68–9, 76, 411, 445, 456, 463
- Ctesiphon 196–7, 394
- cult of saints *see* saints
- Cynicism *see* philosophy
- Cyprian, b. of Carthage 191n13, 270n19, 272
- Cyriacus, b. of Antioch 343n6
- Cyril, b. of Alexandria 344, 367, 370, 416, 419–23, 431, 436, 438–9, 441–3, 446
- Daedalus 202
- Damasus, b. of Rome 187, 189, 200
- Daniel, prophet 219, 222, 328–9
- Daniel, stylite 297
- Darwin, Charles 478
- David, king 181–2, 274
- Day of Atonement 31
- Decius, emperor 271
- defensores ecclesiae* 284
- deification 97, 100
- Demetrius, b. of Alexandria 129
- demon possession 64–5, 73
- demons 62, 65–72, 75–7, 149, 330, 334–5, 337 *see also* devil
- Demosthenes 147
- Desert Fathers *See* monasticism
- devil 65, 194, 212, 270, 324–5, 335, 337, 348, 388n10, 411, 484
- Dianios, bishop 92
- Dictinius 274
- Dido 216–18, 222
- Didymus the Blind 120n9, 128, 370
- diet 90
- dietary laws 30–1, 35
- Diocletian persecution 343–4, 372
- Diodore, b. of Tarsus 416, 444
- Diogenianus 308n68
- Dionysius, b. of Alexandria 354
- Dionysius Exiguus 268, 284
- Dionysos 49
- Dioscorus, b. of Alexandria 369, 378
- Dioscorus of Aphrodito 72
- divination 322, 325, 330, 337
- Donatists 271
- Dorotheos, b. of Antioch 282
- dream/s 324, 350
- oneiromancy *see* divination
- theory 333–8
- types 325, 333
- dream manuals 9, 322–38
- Byzantine 322, 329
- Greco-Roman 322, 329–30
- Easter *See* liturgical seasons
- Ebionites 133–4
- Egypt 7, 9, 73, 85–8, 94, 121, 125, 134, 213, 252, 342–59
- Roman 67
- Egyptians 50
- Eirene *see* Irene
- Eleutherius, saint 326
- Elijah 177
- Elisha 177
- Elizabeth 209–10, 213, 221
- emotions *see* passions
- Empedocles 101–2
- emperor *see* imperial authority
- Ephesus 370n13
- Ephrem of Antioch 436
- Epiphanius, in *Vita Gregentii* 400
- Epiphanius of Salamis 7, 118–25, 127–8
- Equitius, abbot 328
- eschatology 26, 50, 65, 97–9, 226, 244, 468–9, 471, 480–1, 487, 491
- ethnicity 2, 3n7, 7, 26–8, 30
- eucharist 26, 98, 190, 199n47, 310, 429, 433, 445, 472, 494
- Eudoxius, b. of Antioch 282
- Eugenius, usurper 168n5
- Euphemia, empress 9, 314
- Euphemia, saint 381
- Euphemiuss, b. of Constantinople 306, 310

- Eusebius, b. of Caesarea 120, 129, 366, 413  
 Eusebius, b. of Nicomedia 398  
 Eustathius, b. of Antioch 282  
 Eustathius, b. of Sebaste 87, 91, 125  
 Eustathius, monk 428  
 Eustochium 188n3, 191, 198n42  
 Eutyches/ians 369, 427–8, 432, 437, 443, 450  
 Euzoius, b. of Antioch 282  
 Evagrius, b. of Antioch 190, 282–3  
 Evagrius of Pontos 86, 127–8, 330, 370  
 Evagrius Scholasticus 385  
 Eve 177, 201, 210, 212–13, 482, 486, 492  
 evil eye 71  
 excommunication 93, 275, 277, 459  
 exegesis *See* scripture, interpretation of  
 exile 9, 28–9, 145, 150–1, 173, 182, 190, 194, 200, 260, 282–3, 284n90, 302–4, 310, 343, 376, 386  
 exorcism 64–77  
 Exsuperius, b. of Toulouse 273  
 Ezekiel 179
- Fabiola 192n22, 250–1  
 Felix, b. of Rome 326  
 Flavian, b. of Antioch 282–3  
 Flavius Basilius, consul 370  
 Flavius Marcellinus 252, 255  
 Formula of Union (433 CE) 436, 438–9, 441, 445, 448–50  
 Fortunatianus, b. of Aquileia 239  
 Forty martyrs of Sebaste 9, 342–59  
 Francis, pope 494, 496
- Galatia 37  
 Galen 147n30, 149–50, 153, 158, 334–5  
 Galileo 459  
 Gaza 2n3, 85  
 Gelasius of Cyzicus 376  
 gender 10  
 Gentile/s 6, 25–6, 28, 30–8, 41–4, 118, 199, 323, 489  
 George Kedrenos 379–80, 382  
 George the Monk 365, 375–7, 382  
 Germanus, b. of Capua 327  
 Germanus, b. of Constantinople 338  
 gnosticism 70n28, 75, 118, 122–3, 125, 129, 131–2, 134, 136, 273, 483
- god/s 49–50, 54, 57, 70–4, 77, 90, 97, 104–5, 171, 203, 210, 298, 312, 335, 478, 480–2  
 Christian 77, 153, 174, 200, 204–5  
 Egyptian 50  
 Greek 29, 49, 56  
 highest 71  
 Jewish 26, 28, 30, 34–5, 50, 75–6  
 Roman 31, 170–1
- gospel/s 64–6, 72, 75, 91, 93, 181, 267, 373, 387, 409n1, 467, 469  
 John 133  
 Matthew 27–8, 38–44
- Goths 177–8, 253  
 Graeco-Roman world 26, 48, 321  
 Gratian, emperor 167n3, 170
- Greek  
 gods 29, 49, 56  
 hymns 50  
 language 29, 33, 230, 240, 296, 399  
 lifestyle 29, 51  
 mythology 50, 131  
*paideia* 150  
 philosophers 50, 131  
 poets 50
- Greeks 48–51, 61–2, 85, 195  
 Gregentius, archb. of Taphar 398–400  
 Gregory, exarch 390  
 Gregory of Nazianzus 87, 89–91, 95, 143n12, 158, 344, 346, 359, 376, 422–3  
 Gregory of Nyssa 7, 8, 87, 97, 100, 106–14, 128, 230–40, 344–5, 422–3, 486  
 Gregory the Great 322–4, 335–8  
 Grillmeier, Alois 9, 409–23
- habitus* 7, 76  
 Hadrian, emperor 48  
 hagiography *see* saints, lives of  
 Hansteen, Aasta 492  
 Harnack, Adolf von 420, 467–71  
 Hasmoneans 30n10  
 Hatch, Edwin 468  
 healing 66, 68–70, 72, 78, 95, 145–58, 326, 328, 334–5, 395  
 Hegesippus 134  
 Helena, m. of Constantine 301, 394–7  
 Helia, martyr 388  
 Heliodorus, b. of Altinum 188

- Hellenism 29, 334–5  
 Hellenists 33–5  
 Helvidius 278  
 Hephaistos 49  
 Heracleon 132–3  
 Heraclius, emperor 373, 401  
 Herakleitos 88  
 Herakles 49  
 Herban, Jew 398–9  
 Herbert Cardinal Vaughan 458  
 heresy/heretics 8, 10, 119–23, 125, 128, 131,  
     135, 175, 177–8, 181, 187, 192, 195–7,  
     199–201, 205, 268–85, 345n15, 369,  
     372–4, 376, 378, 380–1, 385–6, 427,  
     432–3, 448, 459–60  
     *See also by name*  
 Hermes 49  
 Herodias 177  
 Herod, King 182, 215–16  
 Hilarion 85, 211, 220  
 Hilary, b. of Poitiers 242, 413  
 Hildegard of Bingen 491  
 Himyar 398–401  
 Hinduism 478  
 Hippo 252–3  
 Hippocrates 149  
 Hippolytus 415  
 holy man/men 76, 190, 312  
 Holy Spirit *See* spirit/s  
 Homer/Homeric studies 89, 101–2, 129–31,  
     146  
 homilies *See* preaching  
 Homoians 172, 282  
 Honorius, emperor 269  
 Hooker, Richard 449  
 Horus 70  
 Hügel, Baron Friedrich von 466–7, 469  
 hymns  
     Christian 90  
     Coptic 76  
     Greek 50  
 Ibas 370  
 iconoclasm/iconodulism 371–2, 374, 377,  
     400, 437  
 identity  
     barbarian 3, 48, 61  
     Byzantine 2, 9  
     Christian 6, 25–8, 33–44, 48, 50–4, 61,  
         70–1, 117–18, 129, 136, 170, 188, 195, 199,  
         215, 250, 267–9, 285, 301, 304, 306, 314,  
         322, 338, 350, 393  
     ecclesial 220  
     Egyptian Christian 119, 125, 342, 358–9  
     ethnic 26–7, 48, 51, 61 *See also* ethnicity  
     false/non-/negative 26, 29–32, 34, 44, 65,  
         178–9, 192, 194, 272, 458  
     Gentile 26, 31, 35, 38  
     Graeco-Egyptian 70–1  
     Greek 48, 61  
     Hebrew 51–2, 55, 57, 192, 199  
     imperial 293–314  
     Israelite 28–9, 31–2, 34–5  
     Jewish 6, 25–9, 31–5, 38, 41, 44, 48, 57, 61,  
         129, 148  
     monastic 94, 208–23, 252  
     pagan 26  
     personal 322, 409  
     religious 26, 58, 105n19  
     Roman 2, 304, 306  
     self 27, 29, 31, 33, 40, 150–1, 186–205, 220,  
         253  
     social 26–7, 249, 253, 266–8  
     textual 253  
 identity markers 34, 44  
     actions 170  
     appearance 90, 175, 188n3, 196, 313–14  
     birth/race 28–31, 58, 195  
     doctrine/belief 143n12, 145, 181, 191–2,  
         196, 268, 284–5, 297, 310, 312, 314, 396,  
         427, 454–6, 458  
     heritage 31, 35  
     language 253–4  
     lifestyle 29–31, 38, 50–1, 70, 90, 94, 169,  
         172, 188, 215–16, 268  
     name 32, 133  
     *nomina sacra* 74  
     ritual 35–8, 40–3, 51, 77, 98, 129, 195, 268,  
         285, 310, 312, 314, 396, 427, 472, 494–5  
     terminology 364  
 identity theory 1–4, 266–7, 284–5  
 Ignatius Yacoub III, patriarch 428  
 Illus 301–5  
 imperial  
     administration 296  
     *aduentus* 269

- authority 58, 93, 170–3, 175–7, 179–83,  
     248, 252–4, 273, 285, 293–4, 372  
 coinage 307–8, 313  
 ideology 369  
 patronage 189, 309  
 statues 309, 312  
 treasury 299–301  
*See also law*
- Innocent I 8, 268–85  
 Irenaeus 134, 415, 423  
 Irene, empress 377  
 Irene, *sevastocratorissa* 365  
 Isauria/ns 296, 301–5, 307–8, 310  
 Isis 50  
 Islam 2–3, 478, 483  
 Israel 26, 28–9, 198, 200, 267
- Jacob, Jew 393  
 Jacob, patriarch 213–15, 221–2  
 James, apostle 36–8  
 Jerome 8, 120, 186–205, 208–23, 240, 252,  
     277, 324  
 Jerusalem 29, 33–8, 41, 44, 192, 394, 396  
 Jesuits 454–5, 458n23, 459  
 Jesus 6, 26–8, 33–6, 39–44, 50–2, 54, 57, 60,  
     65–6, 69–72, 74–6, 110, 156, 173, 182, 204,  
     213n13, 267, 327–8, 409, 411–14, 418, 423,  
     454, 467–72, 483, 495
- Jewish  
   as negative label 370  
   Christians 118, 129, 133–4  
   clergy 396  
   dispensation 199n47  
   exorcism 65–6, 74  
   festivals 35  
   heritage 204  
   philosophy 334  
   state 29  
   war 38, 41  
   worship 136
- Jews 3, 9, 25–6, 28–30, 32–4, 36, 42, 48, 50–1,  
     53, 58–9, 61–2, 129, 181, 195, 199, 367,  
     389, 392–8, 401  
   Alexandrian 129  
   Hellenistic 132n47
- Jezebel 177  
 Job 171, 176  
 John, apostle 36, 38
- John IV, b. of Alexandria 343n6  
 John, b. of Jerusalem 277  
 John II, b. of Rome 446  
 John Cassian *See* Cassian  
 John Chrysostom 6, 7, 98, 140–58, 249, 283,  
     344  
 John Malalas 365–72, 381–2  
 John of Damascus 439, 486  
 John Paul II, pope 429–30, 444, 492–6  
 John the Baptist 182, 209–10, 215–16, 222, 465  
 John the Cappadocian 309  
 John the Scythian 304  
 Joseph 213, 221–2, 324  
 Joseph of Nazareth 328  
 Jovinian 189, 193  
 Judaism 3, 25–7, 29–36, 38, 40, 43, 105n19,  
     129, 478  
   Formative 41  
   Rabbinic 32, 392, 396  
   Second Temple 26
- Judas 156  
 Judas Kyriakos 395  
 Julian, emperor 143n12  
 Julian of Eclanum 141n4, 253  
 Julian of Norwich 464n79, 491  
 Juno 217  
 Justin II, emperor 295  
 Justin Martyr 134  
 Justina, m. of Valentinian 177  
 Justinian I, emperor 117–18, 120n9, 125–7,  
     295, 302, 309, 312–13, 343, 366, 368–71,  
     428, 446  
 Justinian II, emperor 364  
 Juvenal, saint 326
- Kedrenos *see* George Kedrenos  
 Kelly, J.N.D. 417  
 Kore 49  
 Kronos 49
- Laban 215n19  
 Lactantius 335–6  
 laity 29, 65, 172–3, 256, 274, 279, 322, 329,  
     336–8, 479  
 Latin 296  
 Law, Mosaic *See* Mosaic law  
 law  
   civil 284

- imperial 173, 176, 179, 183, 269, 330, 368,  
 370–1, 375  
 Lawrence. b. in Siena 284  
 Leo I, b. of Rome 249, 364, 427  
 Leo I, emperor 293, 295–300, 302, 312, 314,  
 401  
 Leo II, emperor 293, 298–300, 302  
 Leo VI, emperor 329n36, 338  
 Leo XIII, pope 457, 458n23  
 Leontia, d. of Leo I, emperor 296–7,  
 299–300, 302–3, 308n68, 309  
 Leontius of Byzantium 428  
 Leontius of Jersusalem 428  
 Leontius, usurper 304–5  
 Leporius 251  
 Lerins 85  
 levites 29, 32  
 Libanius 147, 150n45  
 liturgical calendar 342, 346, 349  
   Easter 368, 370, 433  
   Holy Week 173  
   Lent 346, 349, 356  
   Paschal season 98, 349  
   Pentecost 99, 239, 434  
 liturgy 69, 71–2, 75–7, 97–9, 137, 173, 296–8,  
 310, 432, 444, 447  
 Loisy, Alfred 456–8, 466–7, 469–73  
 Longinus, brother of Zeno 303–4, 307  
 Loof, Friedrich 410  
 love of neighbour 8, 39–40, 93, 95, 250, 258,  
 262–3  
 Lucian of Samosata 50  
 Lucian, presb. of Antioch 409  
 Lyon 483  
  
 Macedonius, b. of Constantinople 310  
 Macedonius, heretic 376  
 Macrina 87–8, 91, 113  
 madness *See* mental illness  
 magi/magic 322, 393, 396  
   *See also* spells  
 Makarios 85, 127–8  
 Malalas *see* John Malalas  
 Malchus 208–23  
 Manasses 365  
 Manichean 192, 232, 273  
 Mar Baselius Marthoma Mathews I,  
   catholicos 430  
 Mar Bawai 449  
 Marcella 196–7  
 Marcellina 173–6, 179, 182  
 Marcellus, b. of Ancyra 284  
 Marcian, b. of Niš 279  
 Marcian, emperor 296–7, 299, 305, 307–8,  
 367  
 Marcian, s. of Anthemius 299–300, 302–3,  
 305, 309  
 Marcion/ites 131, 134–5  
 Marcus, *caesar* 293  
 Mar Dinkha IV, catholicos-patriarch 444  
 Maris the Persian 370  
 Mark, apostle 129  
 Maronia 190, 209  
 marriage 33, 208–16, 220, 296–7, 299, 308,  
 331, 359, 388, 396, 399, 491  
 Marseille 85, 252  
 Martin of Tours 85  
 Mary, m. of Jesus 52, 55, 57, 68, 71–2, 278,  
 298, 326, 328, 338, 388n10, 394–5, 434,  
 436, 441, 444–7, 492, 495–6  
 Mary of Magdala 483  
 Matrona 296  
 Maximus Confessor 6, 144, 386, 390–1, 439,  
 486  
 Maximus, usurper 170, 181  
 medicine *See* healing  
 Melania the Younger 484  
 Meletius, b. of Antioch 282  
 mental illness 146–7, 149, 152  
 Mesopotamia 87, 208  
 messiah 6, 26–8, 33–5, 39–44, 50–1, 54, 58,  
 470–1  
 Methodius of Olympus 120–1, 123, 125, 127  
 miaphysite *See* Christianity  
 Michael, archangel 76  
 Michael VII, emperor 379  
 Michael Psellos 365  
 Milan 167n3, 173, 252, 259  
 miracles 65, 69  
 monasticism 7, 8, 73n43, 85–99, 119, 128,  
 149, 189, 208–23, 250–2, 256, 264, 277,  
 296, 310, 326, 328–30, 334–8, 359, 390,  
 445  
 Celtic 85  
 coenobitic 85, 94, 98  
 Coptic 86



- Egyptian 85–8, 117, 119, 121, 127, 299, 342,  
 345, 349, 484–5  
 eremitic 85–8  
 Evagrius 127–8  
 gendered 73n43, 94, 299, 328  
 Greek, in Rome 400n52  
 Scythian 445  
 monophysite *See* Christianity  
 monotheism 26, 30–1, 50, 254, 482  
 monothelitism 390  
 Montanists 269, 285  
 Moran Mar Ignatius Zakka I Iwas 429  
 Mosaic law 26, 29, 31–42, 44  
 Moses 130, 191, 200–1, 204, 214–15, 221–2, 327  
 Muslims 5  
  
 Naboth 177  
 Nathan 181–2, 327  
 Nebuchadnezzar 324  
 Nemesius of Emesa 149  
 Nero, emperor 367, 369n9  
 Nerses Shnorhali 441  
 Nestorius/an 366–7, 379, 427, 432–3, 437,  
 442–4, 447  
 Newman, John Henry 454, 456, 460–6, 469,  
 471  
 Nicene *See* Christianity  
 Nicephorus I, b. of Constantinople 338  
 Nichomachus Flavianus 168n5  
 Nicolaos the proselyte 32  
 Nicomedia 396n29  
 Nika riots 302  
 Nikephoros Kallistos Xanthopoulos 364,  
 368  
 Nisibis 208  
 Nitria 128  
 non-Chalcedonian *See* Christianity  
 Novation/ists 269–73, 280–1, 285  
  
 Olympias 151, 155, 484  
 oracular sayings 57  
 ordination 91, 187, 278–82, 445, 479–80,  
 493–5  
 Oricatus, magus 392–3  
 Origen 7, 76, 89, 101, 104, 106–10, 117–37,  
 142n7, 194–5, 234, 240, 413, 418, 423  
 Origenism 117–21, 124–5, 128, 140, 196, 370,  
 373, 380  
  
 orthodoxy 10, 86, 117, 119, 125, 135, 140n1, 141,  
 167n3, 173, 176, 187, 196, 278, 297, 301,  
 306, 310–12, 342, 344, 358–9, 371–3, 376,  
 381, 423, 438, 444, 463, 471  
     *See also* catholic  
 Osiris 50  
 Oxyrhynchus 77  
  
 Pachomios 85–6, 94, 128  
 pagan/s/ism 25, 90, 107, 129, 168–70, 177, 181,  
 322, 324, 330, 337, 366, 372, 381, 391–3  
*paideia* 7, 145, 150, 158, 190, 205, 296  
 Palladius, *scholasticus* 400  
 Palestine 85, 87, 127, 221  
 Pammachius 193–7, 204  
 Pamphilus 120  
 Papias of Hierapolis 134  
 passions, therapy of 90, 96–7, 103, 147, 149,  
 152–4, 228, 235, 258–9, 262, 312, 328, 486  
 Patricius, *caesar* 293, 296–7, 299  
 Patricius, *magister officiorum* 301, 307  
 Paul, apostle 34–8, 40, 44, 95, 148, 189, 201,  
 204  
 Paul Evergetinus 337  
 Paul, monk 87n6, 220  
 Paul VI, pope 428–9  
 Paula 221–2  
 Pauline writings 65, 112–13, 118, 121, 124–5,  
 130, 133–6, 201, 225–6, 250, 481  
 Paulinus, b. of Antioch 187, 282–3  
 Paulinus, b. of Nola 252  
 Pelagia, ascetic 379  
 Pelagius/anism 141n4, 187, 191–2, 196–7, 252,  
 255, 275–7, 285  
 penance 270, 272–5, 279–80, 429  
*peregrini* 170  
 Perpetua, martyr 483–4  
 Persia 308, 392  
 Persian conquest 394  
 Peter, apostle 36–8, 94, 274, 328, 367n5, 396,  
 455, 463, 483  
 Peter the Deacon 323  
 Peter the Patrician 306n59  
 Petre, Maude 455–6, 467  
 Petronius Probus 169  
 Pharas, Jew 393  
 Pharisees 27, 33, 40–1  
 Philip of Side 391–3

- Philippi 37  
 Philo of Alexandria 101, 105, 129–30, 132n47, 334  
 Philodemus 157  
 philosophy 88–90, 103, 107, 109n33, 129, 131, 144–58, 171, 205, 227–8, 256–64, 333–6, 392, 396, 464  
   Aristotelian 112, 125, 147, 158, 334  
   Cartesian 492  
   Cynic 90  
   Epicurean 153, 158  
   Hellenistic 100, 105, 136, 146, 148, 150, 157  
   Kantian 468, 493  
   neo-pagan 143n12  
   Pythagorean 101  
   Rousseau 493  
   Stoic 151, 153, 158, 169, 259, 335–7, 485–6  
   *See also* Platonism  
 Philoxenus of Mabbug 427, 432  
 Phokas, emperor 370  
 Photinians 284–5  
 Photius 120n9  
 Pius X, pope 456, 458n23, 466  
 plague 326, 377, 380  
 Platonism 7, 62, 88, 100–14, 125, 158, 171, 334–5, 337, 417, 485, 487, 492  
   middle 112, 334, 336  
   neo- 260, 334, 336  
 Plotinus 101–4, 107, 112  
 Plutarch 148  
 Pluto 49  
 poet/ry 187, 199, 202–3, 205  
*politeia* 29  
 polytheism 52, 65–6, 70–1  
 Pontius Pilate 65, 68, 367, 369n9  
 Pontos 89, 91–2, 95  
 Porphyry 101, 334, 336n71  
 Porphyry, b. of Antioch 283  
 Portian basilica 173  
 Possidius, b. of Calama 253  
 poverty/the poor 8, 37, 111, 133, 169, 174, 182, 210–11, 230–1, 248–64  
 prayer 33, 71–3, 76, 90, 98, 188, 225, 328, 447, 483  
   Lord's 72, 240, 336  
   Trishagion 310  
 preaching 6, 33, 57, 98, 118, 136–7, 143, 145, 148, 156–7, 173, 175, 182, 188, 190, 194, 198, 252, 255–6, 259, 385–6, 388  
 presbyter/s 69, 129, 136, 191n13, 251, 271, 283, 396  
   *See also* priest  
 priest/s 129  
   Christian 69, 136, 145, 158, 167, 170–1, 174–7, 179–80, 182–3, 187–91, 195, 197, 205, 225, 252, 271, 273–5, 278–82, 302, 326, 376, 392, 429, 445, 479–80, 493–6  
   Jewish 29, 32, 33, 396  
 Priscilla 269n15  
 Priscillian/ism 269, 273–5, 285  
 Probus, b. of Reati 326  
 Proclus, b. of Constantinople 446  
 Procopius 364  
 prophet/s 76, 88, 176, 182, 187, 198n44, 204, 219, 237, 241–2, 323  
 Proterius, b. of Alexandria 378  
 Protestant *See* Christianity  
 Psellos *See* Michael Psellos  
 psychagogy 145–58, 255  
 psychology, human 1, 7, 96, 101–3, 107, 113, 146–7, 149, 152, 155, 204, 226–8, 249, 258, 32, 328, 334–7  
 Pulcheria, empress 297–8, 301, 305, 307–9  
 Pyrrhus, b. of Constantinople 373, 390–1  
 Pythagoreans *See* philosophy  
 Qumran 27, 32  
 Ravenna 252, 269  
 Reformation 141–2  
 religious conflict *See* conflict  
 religious practices *See* ritual  
 Rhea 49  
 rhetoric 150, 154, 158, 179, 192n25, 244, 249, 252–3, 255, 259, 385, 401  
 Richard, Marcel 422  
 ritual 29–30, 32–3, 35, 40, 65–6, 69, 71, 74, 76, 91, 98, 168, 170–1, 173, 179, 188, 270–3, 280–1, 296–7, 310, 429, 445, 472  
   initiation 26, 34, 42–3, 66, 270–2, 281, 481  
 rivalry, religious 137, 205  
 Roman/s 35, 58, 61, 170, 178, 181, 392  
   administration 168, 179, 184  
   army 305

- church 268, 271, 282–4, 323, 427, 457, 494  
 clergy 189  
 gods 31, 217  
 history/historiography 30, 170, 176n54,  
   181, 217, 379  
 language *See* Latin  
 philosophy 154  
 temples 181  
 Romanos Melodos 388  
 Rome 170–1, 177, 181, 187, 189, 251–2, 269, 271,  
   309, 326, 367, 370n13, 377, 390, 395–6,  
   444–5, 454  
   Aventine monasteries 400n52  
   Basilica Ulpia 395  
   Church of St Peter 328  
 Rufinus, b. of Thessaloniki 279  
 Rufinus of Aquileia 92, 107, 120, 193–5  
  
 Sabas, monk 312  
 Sabbath 30–1, 35, 40, 239  
 Sabellius, heretic 376  
 Sadducees 27  
 saints 326–7, 329, 338  
   cult of 72, 77, 298, 342–59, 387  
   lives of 220, 322–4, 343, 386–7, 400–1, 483  
 Samaritans 392  
 Samuel 327  
 Sapphira 211  
 Saracens 208, 213, 215–17  
 Sarah 209  
 Sarra, *amma* 484–5  
 Satan *See* devil  
 scripture  
   as authority 204  
   Christian 70, 88, 90–1, 93, 96, 98, 130–4,  
     180, 323 *See also* bible  
   education in 296  
   interpretation of 129–37, 143, 157, 187,  
     193–5, 198, 200–5, 225, 228–44, 256, 396,  
     409, 480–1, 487, 489  
   Jewish 26, 31, 74, 130, 323, 392, 399  
     *See also* Torah  
   medical 157  
   philosophical 157  
   use of 135, 153, 173, 176, 179, 181, 191, 197–8,  
     212, 222, 256, 274, 323, 328, 396, 461, 484  
 Second Sophistic 48, 150  
  
 Second Temple Judaism *See* Judaism  
 sectarianism 8, 27, 38, 40, 117, 134–6, 140–1,  
   173, 191, 196, 274, 282–5  
   *See also* heresy  
 Seleon/Syleon, Jew 397  
 Selymbria 295  
 Serenus, St 72  
 Sergius and Bacchus, saints 342, 358  
 Sergius, heretic 373, 427n13  
 Severus, b. of Antioch 6, 312–13, 342–4, 346,  
   359, 380, 386, 427  
 sexual conduct 50–1, 70, 187, 213, 216–7, 322,  
   325, 330–3, 337, 490  
 Shenouda III, pope 429  
 Shenuda/Shenute 86  
 Sicily 359  
*silentarius* 307  
 Silvan, b. in Numidia 276  
 Simeon Stylites 297  
 Simon Magus 367n5, 396  
 sin 147, 152, 235, 326, 336, 411, 461, 486  
 Sinai 85  
 Skete 85  
 slavery 214–16, 219, 238, 331, 483, 485, 489  
 society  
   Israelite 29  
   tribal 28  
 Sohm, Rudolf 467–8  
 Sophia, empress 9, 295, 307, 314  
 Sophronius, b. of Jerusalem 386  
 Sozomen 141n4  
 spells 7, 67, 69–71, 73, 76  
   Coptic 75  
   *See also* magic  
 Speyr, Adrienne von 496  
 spirit 70  
   evil *See* demons  
   Holy 52, 54–5, 70–2, 95–9, 108, 201, 204,  
     226, 229, 232, 239–44, 348, 366–7, 400,  
     413, 472  
 St Andrew, monastery of 335  
 Stanton, Elizabeth Cady 492  
 Stephen, b. of Rome 272  
 Stephen, merchant 326  
 Sulpicius Severus 85  
 Sylvester, b. of Rome 395–7  
 Symeon Logothete 378, 381

- Symmachus 168–71  
 Symphosius 274  
 synagogue 31–2, 129, 137, 179, 181–3  
 synod/s 173, 253, 274–5, 283  
   Aquileia (381 CE) 172n26, 177  
   Capua (391/2 CE) 278  
   Elvira 279  
   Laodicea 356, 359  
   Lateran (649 CE) 386, 390  
   Persian bishops (410 CE) 445  
   Rimini (359 CE) 172n26  
   Toledo (400 CE) 273–4, 279  
   Zaragosa (380 CE) 273  
 Syria 85–7, 342–3, 345  
   Coele- 87  
  
 Talmud 208n2  
 Tarasicodissa 296  
 Tarasios, b. of Constantinople 374  
 Tarsilla 326  
 Tarsus 304  
 Tatian 134  
 temple 174, 181  
   cult 33  
   destruction 29  
   tax 31–2  
 Tertullian 335–6, 413  
 Thebes 73  
 Thecla 387–8  
 Theodora, empress 9, 295, 302, 307, 309,  
   312–14  
 Theodore, doorkeeper 328  
 Theodore, heretic 370  
 Theodore of Mopsuestia 142n7, 416, 444  
 Theodoret of Cyrrihus 141n4, 153, 370, 437–9  
 Theodoric 297  
 Theodosius I, emperor 167, 171, 179–83, 366  
 Theodosius II, emperor 296–7  
 theopaschites 368, 370  
 Theophanes Confessor 371–5, 381  
 Theophilus of Alexandria 119, 120n9, 127,  
   140n3  
 Theophilus of Antioch 134  
 Theophylact Simocatta 365  
*theotokos* See Mary, m. of Jesus  
 Thessaloniki 370n13  
 Thomas, apostle 274  
  
 Thomas Aquinas 258  
 Three Chapters 371, 373  
 Thucydides 147  
 Tiberius, emperor 307  
 Timothy, b. of Constantinople 310  
 Timothy I, the Great, catholicos 446–7  
 tithing 33  
 Torah 6, 28, 30–1, 33–5, 37–44  
 Trebizond 308  
 Trier Ivory 298  
 trinitarian theology 120–1, 233, 432, 434,  
   436, 445, 491, 496  
 Troeltsch, Ernst 467–9, 471  
 Tyrrell, George 10, 454–73  
  
 Urbicius, *cubicularius* 303, 307  
  
 Valens, emperor 229  
 Valentinian II, emperor 167–8, 170–6  
 Valentinus 131  
 Valerius, b. of Hippo 225  
 Vandals 253  
 Verina, empress 294–307, 309, 311  
 Vestal Virgins 169  
 Vetus Latina See bible  
 Victorinus, b. of Poetovio 239  
 Victricius, b. of Rouen 269–71  
 Vienne 483  
 violence 181, 266, 301  
 Virgil 202–3  
 virginity 50, 52, 55, 57–8, 87–8, 172, 208–10,  
   212–17, 219–22, 251, 326–7, 331, 336, 388,  
   484  
 virtue 95, 100–1, 103–4, 110, 112–14, 143n12,  
   144, 148, 152, 154–6, 158, 169, 172, 176, 178,  
   180, 183, 187–9, 219, 222, 226–8, 230, 236,  
   238, 240–3, 306, 331, 485  
 visions 322–8, 337–8, 344, 398, 496  
 Vulgate See bible  
  
 Wadi El-Natrun 342, 431  
 Weiss, Johannes 469–70  
 women 70, 73n43, 94, 169, 177, 208–23, 250,  
   322, 326–8, 331–3, 478–97  
   ascetic 169, 223  
   imperial 293–314  
   negative 177

- married 94  
widows 87-8, 176n52, 210, 251, 484
- Yom Kippur *See* Day of Atonement
- Zachariah 209-10, 213, 221  
Zacharias, pope 337
- Zambri, magus 396  
Zeno, emperor 293-4, 296-7, 299-309,  
311-12  
Zeno, s. of Zeno 299n32  
Zenophilus 397  
Zeus 49  
Zonaras 381-2